Letters

Oswald Spengler

OSWALD SPENGLER

SPENGLER LETTERS

1913 ~ 1936

HERITAGE

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INTRODUCTION

Oswald Spengler died in the night of May 7–8, 1939, from a heart attack—quite unexpectedly. He had not reached the age of 56. More than a quarter of a century separates us from that day, more than half a century has passed since the first of the letters appearing in this volume, which bear witness to the early incubation and individual development of Spengler's masterpiece. It is a generation ago since the appearance of his last book *The Hour of Decision* with which—in his opinion, for the time being, in fact for ever—he bade farewell to the arena of political strife. Thus a generation has passed since his lifetime, which for us has become an irrevocable yesterday, particularly so because of a war which turned our existence upside down. He foresaw it: 'We are standing perhaps on the threshold of the Second World War, in which the alignment of the powers is unknown, and the military, industrial, and revolutionary resources and aims are impossible to foresee. Germany is not an island. If we do not see our relation to the world as the most important problem which faces us, destiny—and what a destiny—will pass us by without pity.'

Nine months before this prophecy he had written sadly: 'I can see more clearly ahead, but I feel more lonely than ever, not as if I were among the blind, but rather among people with their eyes bandaged so that they cannot see their house falling down.' All his life long Spengler felt that he was misunderstood. The first letters show this. He felt that he belonged to the misunderstood and hated. 'In order to be understood,' he said to comfort himself, 'one must have, as I see more and more clearly, not from this case only but from the entire history of thought, a new generation *born* with the ability to understand.' From *The Decline of the West* to his last political writing there is always an invocation to the future, and the coming generation.

Is the generation to which Spengler appealed endowed with the disposition to understand his teaching? It is strange that one cannot give a decisive answer to this question. Interest in his work

has increased throughout the world. But there are those who reject Spengler, regarding him as a forerunner of the National-Socialistic revolution and of a dictatorial government—Caesarism.

In his lonely path Spengler was not easy to follow. He was suspect in the eyes of the 'Third Reich' as being opposed to National Socialism, towards which the democrats suspected that his inclinations actually lay. One hesitates as to whether one should protect oneself from his persuasive powers, or whether one can arrive at and uphold a conviction of one's own by having it out with him.

The latter is the only sure test. To master the past is in fact an important task of the contemporary science of history and of philosophy. But the past cannot be mastered so long as one looks back on it from the new standpoint, from the new world, as upon something which one does not and cannot understand; on the contrary it is necessary to put oneself back into the past world. An example of this is what Alexis de Tocqueville accomplished in his book *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution*. The principles which he developed in his masterly introduction can be applied by analogy to our own time. To understand everything does not mean, as the proverb says, to forgive everything. To forgive is a gift of Grace, to understand is a duty demanded by Justice.

In order to be able to understand we must first disclose the sources *sine ira et studio*, collect the facts and illuminate the motives. This book will make a contribution thereto. The occasion seems to be suitable: Spengler's period is sufficiently remote from us to permit of a dispassionate examination, and yet it is near enough to us for all the facts and evidence to be within the memory of contemporaries.

The present collection was made by Spengler's sister, Frau Hildegard Kornhardt, and her daughter Fraulein Dr Hildegard Kornhardt. Of course it does not include all the correspondence. Much perished in the war. Spengler himself did not keep all his letters, when he was hard up for paper he used to cut them up for making notes (this indeed was the fate of the manuscript of his masterpiece). It is noteworthy that letters which might have

harmed Spengler in the Hitler period, certainly after June 30, 1934, were destroyed by him and, after his death, by his heirs. In spite of this the volume is very large, and much is too unimportant for publication. Therefore only those letters are selected which seem to fulfil the purpose of characterizing Spengler as a man, or of illustrating his intellectual development and his political activity, or which throw light on the history and psychology of his time.

In fact Spengler is not one of the masters of letter writing. His sister said: 'He always disliked writing letters, even when he was a child.' In his later letters there is a recurring sigh 'I don't at all enjoy writing letters.' Much as he disliked wasting time he preferred granting an interview to making a written reply. It is always an indication of his sympathy or regard if he wrote anyone a letter of any length. He is usually brief, and as he grew older put less and less of his personal feelings into his letters. In his political letters he deliberately expresses himself briefly, merely arranges meetings, and alludes to various people only in cipher. It is necessary therefore to publish the letters of his correspondents whose questions or answers illustrate much which otherwise would in Spengler's letters remain obscure, particularly those with whom he corresponded concerning scientific, political and industrial questions and who, whether by their agreement, help, hints, information, disagreement or criticism, became cooperators in his work. Among the hundreds of Spengler's correspondents are included important figures in the sphere of learning, industry and politics. Sometimes letters of thanks and invitations have been included in order to show the width of Spengler's circle of correspondents.

The letters are published in chronological order. Different interests are paramount in the various periods, but the duality of Spengler's passions for learning and for politics remains constant throughout. A political motive appears even in his scientific investigations, while from the political struggle of the day he tries to find his way up to the height of an abstract scientific survey of events.

In periods of political activity he does not allow his learned

correspondence to lapse, nor does he neglect the political, at a time when he is more seriously devoting himself to his historical and political tasks. 'The multiplicity of the subjects, artistic, historical, philosophical and political, dealt with', of which Hilde Kornhardt speaks in her introduction to *Speeches and Essays*, is characteristic of Spengler's writings as well as his letters. 'My existence is divided almost to infinity', Goethe once confessed in his youth, and a similar division, if not an infinite fragmentation, complicates the polarity of Spengler between erudition and politics. Such a wide foundation, such a richness of possibilities becomes an actual problem: Spengler makes a virtue of it. He tries to realize in his person the Renaissance ideal of the *uomo singulare ed universale*. His talents permit him to establish that astounding relationship between the most diverse spheres of existence which in his writings sometimes delights and at other times repels; he is able to lay transverse sections across a period and to find a unity of style in all departments of art and life, which romanticists have called the 'signature of the century'. In *Man and Technics* he avows: 'It is my conviction that one can only understand the destiny of mankind by looking simultaneously and comparatively at all departments of his activity. It is a mistake to throw light only on particular aspects of say politics, religion, or art, and then to believe that one has told the whole story.' This maxim which Spengler applies to mankind in general, also, one cannot help thinking, applies to Spengler himself and his writing. What, in the Spengler masterpiece, through his genius and his descriptive intensity, becomes a unity, in the letters breaks into pieces. What is contrary, illogical and disconnected becomes evident as such. The passionate style which is a feature of his chief work is absent, likewise the integrating power of his personality; what is said is *ad hoc*, it is provisional, and the quality of the style varies obviously according to the person he is writing to and the occasion and the subject.

It is, says Spengler, the *destiny* of everyone that he is not only by his birth introduced into world history in general, but into a definite century, a definite country, a definite people, a definite religion, a definite rank. We can *not* choose. One must adapt one-

self to this destiny or chance. Situations, views, and achievements are pre-ordained. There are no men *per se*, as philosophers make out, but only men of a certain time, a certain place, a certain race with a personal nature, which survives or succumbs in the struggle with a predetermined world. This assertion of the singularity of every concrete historical existence shows clearly that Spengler regards life as a struggle between the stamped individuality and the predetermined world. Do we apply this formula to his own life? Do we distinguish between the nature of this man and the world he encountered? Do we ask what was the result of his struggle with the world? Whether *this* man conquered or was defeated, and how far he transformed the chance of existence into destiny?

Fichte said that a man's philosophy depended on what sort of man he was. Spengler's example supports this statement, the crux of it being that the coincidence between his personality and his philosophy, unconscious in the case of others, is asserted and achieved by Spengler with inevitability. My picture of the world, he says, is true 'because it is *identical* with my life. The symbolism is essential.' Ranke once said he would like to exclude his own personality. Not so Spengler. He himself is there in every line he writes. In every one of his books he is himself once again, his nature expressed in words. That is another reason why, except during his lonely work on his first book, he did not express himself confidentially in his letters as a man; his work is, like all his thought, self-expression, and admittedly so. Observe how many subjective feelings are expressed in his writings! One is conscious of the whole gamut, if one may so express it, of the emotional theme. From his dissertation on Heraclitus up to his last book, throughout the period of a generation, the same characteristic qualities reoccur: noble, proud, great, severe; scorn, loathing, hatred and toughness. There is an aristocratic pretension in this, a claim to an exceptional position, the model which Nietzsche had implanted in the first generation which was subjected to his influence: 'Candour' and 'Integrity'.

It is also no accident that, in spite of the distance which separates the Frenchman and the German, Stendhal should have been a

favourite writer of Spengler's, Stendhal who defined his world philosophy as egotism. The characterization of the exceptional individual given by Spengler has the quality of a proclamation of self: 'therefore the deep despairing urge of the exceptional individual, to remain *inwardly* free. Here . . . *individualism appears as the opposition to mass-psychology*. It is the last protest of the beast of prey soul against imprisonment in civilization. . . . Thence the types of the robber, the adventurer, the hermit, even a certain kind of criminal and Bohemian. They try to avoid absorption in the mass by putting themselves above it, by fleeing from it, despising it. The idea of personality is a protest against the masses. The tension between them increases till it reaches a tragic denouement.' As in the case of Rousseau we find in Spengler on the one side the assertion of an unlimited freedom of the strong personality, on the other, in his political theory, support of rigid regulation. It would be wrong to regard Spengler as cold hearted. The letters show that he was always ready to help others and to take steps on their behalf: he acts as a go-between with publishers, corrects MSS. for others, goes round with the cap on behalf of the academic ventures of others, tries to help friends in business and to further young talents. Admittedly he will always assert his own views, and when he feels deceived or disappointed, he reacts with sharp and wounding words. One is reminded of the saying from *The last days of Ulrich Hutten*: 'I am not a book which has been thought out, I am a human being with all his contradictions.' What was the world ordained for this particular human being? For the first half of his life the Empire under William II, a Bismarckian construction with the hegemony of Prussia constitutionally anchored and supported by Army and officialdom, a world with strict written and unwritten precedences and rules. For a long time the Germans have ceased to be a people of poets and philosophers, but rather, as Spengler himself has said, a 'people of technicians and engineers', and, as he might have added, of merchants! But still one thinks fondly of the splendour of the Goethe epoch and celebrates the remembrance days of the 'poet-princes'. In the same way national triumphs are commemorated: Sedan and the foundation of the

Empire. From the first Spengler laughed at these celebrations, later, when the empire had come to an end, he felt a deep dislike for all 'fuss', he mistrusted everything associated with excitement and phrase making. In his criticism, however, the current prejudices of the imperial epoch have crept in: the French 'hereditary foe', the English 'nation of shopkeepers' and 'German character', by which the world is to be healed, the phrases are intellectualized, raised perhaps to a higher level, but still barbed.

Spengler was a nationalist. It is wrong to try to argue one's way out of this conclusion by alluding to his sympathy for all world-cultures and nations, as it is equally impossible to modify his anti-democratic position, his criticisms of democracy, by saying that he only desired another form of democracy: to do this is to mistake Spengler's opinion or else the meaning of democracy. He was also an imperialist—'Here I am expounding imperialism.' He appealed to the deceptively simple phrase of Cecil Rhodes—'Expansion is everything.' His aims were the same as those of the other German nationalists, but he did not share their euphoria: 'In the year 1911, when with the Morocco crisis the world war actually began' he was horrified 'by the stupidity of our policy . . . by the blindness of the groups which did not believe in a war which actually had already broken out, and by a criminal and suicidal optimism'. He foresaw the war but not the defeat of Germany. In this respect he was not pessimistic. Germany must prepare for its mission and adopt the right mood, as without a struggle it would not attain its purposes. He regarded 1911 as parallel to the period of the Punic wars (the West parallel with the classical world). This was the conclusion he drew from his philosophy of history. Berlin was his Rome, Prussia his Latium, Germany his Italy, and the future empire would extend over the world—*sunt certi denique fines?* The wrong prognoses in his war-time letters do not give the best evidence for his prophetical vision, rather they reveal in an observable period of history, that the facts of history cannot be foreseen, furthermore, to what an extent a powerful intelligence is imprisoned in the views of its environment.

If it is impossible to determine beforehand the events which

arise from man's free will, the same applies to important trends, and Spengler guessed correctly when he proclaimed that the First World War was only the beginning of a chain of wars and revolutions.

The second half of Spengler's life, actually his working period, stretches from the eve of the First to the eve of the Second World War. He was contemporary with three revolutions, far and near, the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, the German democratical revolution of 1918 (later the troubles over the Soviet republic in Munich), and the National Socialist revolution of 1933.

'Anxiety is a feeling caused by knowledge of things to come, as regret is a knowledge of what has been.' Spengler experienced anxiety when he looked forward at the future of Germany, since the 1918 revolution (and, before that, the defeat of Germany) had given history a different course from that which he desired. But he felt no regrets when he looked backwards. The German Right Wing could not or would not look objectively at the part played by Germany in the war or the failure of German leadership, just in the same way they regarded themselves as 'undefeated in the field', robbed of the fruits of victory, which they believed they had deserved, and put the blame for the collapse of all their hopes on the democratic government, thus inverting cause and effect. As had happened in France after the disaster of 1871 and the resulting peace treaty which had given Germany Alsace Lorraine, the treaty of Versailles aroused in Germany the spirit of revenge.

Clemenceau, Foch, and Poincaré had not expected anything else, and for that very reason made the peace terms as severe as possible. Almost all parties in Germany regarded the Treaty of Versailles as a 'Diktat' and an injustice, while by the war guilt paragraphs, a novelty in international law, she had to accept the bitter aftertaste of moral condemnation (whether or not this was intended by the peace negotiators). Resistance to Versailles, or compliance, was actually only a question of the expedient tactics, the politicians who favoured compliance did not regard themselves as any less 'national' than the men of the Right, but they were burdened by the latter with the odium attached to cowardly defeatism. Thus began the fatal division in Germany, the legend

of the 'stab in the back' appeared, the political wings gradually grew further and further apart, a whole generation returning from the furnace of the battlefields to the grey hopelessness of the homeland developed a mental attitude of which the most terse expression is the inscription on the war memorial in the Josefplatz in Munich: Invictis victis victuri (Those who will conquer to the unconquered conquered).

Spengler belonged to the Nationalist Right. Hatred and disgust were his guides, hatred for France, disgust towards the revolutionaries of 1918 and for the creators of the republic. 'Hatred implies respect for one's opponent, beings of a lower order one despises.' He demanded of Youth that it should hate: 'he who is unable to hate is no man'. He prophesied the inevitable collapse of democracy. 'The best Germans, and not only the Germans, are waiting for the appearance of a man, in whose hands one can place the destiny of the country, with full power to remove anyone who tries to restrict this power in the interest of individual groups. The eighteenth century was that of free princes, the nineteenth century brought the freedom of the peoples . . . in the place of what has resulted from this freedom the twentieth century will establish the freedom of the Great Personality.'

This was as near as Spengler got to National Socialism, and with him a number of the intelligentsia of the Right, whom Armin Mohler summed up under the paradoxical but telling phrase 'the Conservative Revolution'. (It is highly significant and worthy of exhaustive inquiry to ascertain why a German *élite* took the turn to the Right, while at the same time the young *élites* of other nations turned Left.) Nevertheless, Spengler rejected National Socialism. For this there are various reasons: he did not believe in the Race-theory. Hitler did not appeal to him as the hoped-for leader personality. The one interview between them in Bayreuth in 1933 was a disappointment to Spengler. His repugnance to the dictator had an earlier origin, dating from the days of the Munich Putsch in 1923. Spengler regarded the *coup d'état* as a venture bound to fail and therefore misguided; it would only delight the French, would weaken the State and detract from the national cause by bringing it into discredit. He

feared the German tendency to look upon politics as a youth movement. In his speech on *The political duties of German Youth*, delivered at Würzburg on the day when the prosecution of Hitler and Ludendorff began, he issued a warning: 'National politics are regarded as a sort of inebriation. Crowds of youths were inspired by colours and badges, by music and processions, by theatrical promises and amateur appeals and theories. Undoubtedly these things are satisfying to the emotions, but politics are a different affair, it is a question of what will succeed. For whose benefit is the present popular movement working? For France. In any case passion does not guarantee success. All too often our national movement . . . presents the picture of a bull in the arena . . . it is not sufficient for a statesman to be a clever businessman . . . however, trumpeters are hardly generals.' In 1932 he pronounced with annihilating brevity: 'The pathfinder must be a real hero, not an operatic hero. A ship is in a parlous state if the crew are drunk in a storm.' In the summer of 1932 he said: 'This is no time and no occasion for triumphal rejoicings . . . enthusiasts are in danger of regarding the situation as too simple. . . . This seizure of power has been carried out in a whirlpool of strength and weakness . . . the noisy celebrations every day distress me.' The psychological reason for his critical attitude towards National Socialism was, no doubt, a feeling of aristocratic integrity—Spengler's hatred of the proletariat. In confidential circles he called the National-Socialist party 'the organization of the unemployed by the workshy'. He hoped that Gregor Strasser would improve matters. But Strasser was put to death in June 1934.

In Hitler he scented the plebeian (in the sense of the vision of Donoso Cortes), the mass man who mingles with the masses in inebriated enthusiasm, who incorporates himself in them. He failed to observe that the Caesarism which he had prophesied could not appear in any other form, that the tyrant, as Plato points out in the Politeia, is always the 'index' of the masses, and rose to power only on the shoulders of the masses, that even the Caesars had erected their throne on the enthusiasm of the masses.

His attitude at this time showed that Spengler, for good and for evil, had his roots in the imperial epoch, and that his deepest

feelings prevented him from coming to terms, either with democracy or with the National Socialist dictatorship (leaving Bolshevism out of the question), that his sensitivity to all crises derived from a deep-seated perceptive apprehension of the epoch of violence, the advent of which he proclaimed with all his might, and that finally in spite of all his talk about beast of prey ethics and the odour of blood, with which he over-trumped Nietzsche, the moral rules, instincts and inhibitions which actually governed his own life belonged to the code of honour of a past world.

Does this mean that he lost the battle of his life? Certainly by an effort of mind and will he transformed the elements of chance in his individuality and the world he was given, into a fixed form identical with his inmost being, in his case he raised chance to the status of destiny. Would it have mattered greatly to him, supposing one could ask him, if his life and work had been successful or unsuccessful with regard to its effect. Did he not look upon the history of mankind as a whole, the history of every culture, and the history of every single individual basically as a tragedy? Had he not cast aside all transcendental support and preached only grandeur of demeanour?

On glancing through the letters one is struck by the fate that befell so many of Spengler's correspondents. Many died a violent death in the years of the terror and the war, some under unimaginable torments. Who knows whether Spengler, if he had lived longer, would have escaped from Hitler's executioners. His connection with many proscribed men involved the death penalty. The catastrophe he foretold overtook Germany without mercy. Who would venture to pass judgment as to the meaning of all these lives and deaths, these thoughts and deeds, as to the meaning of this period of history? The final answer remains hidden. Yet it will have so much meaning as we can lend it by what we can make of the present time.

A. M. Koktenek

Letters from and to Oswald Spengler

1913–1936

1913

Letters from Oswald Spengler to Hans Klöres, 1913–1918

Munich, 13.12.13

Today at last you shall have an answer to your amiable letter; I have been meaning to write for a long time, but unfortunately I am very seldom in the right mood.

I am very glad that you have got hold of Woermann's old writing table; I too should like to have a couple of pieces like that; but I should not like any literary trash to come into being on such a fine piece of furniture. You write that you have been studying Kleist's stories as a model. That seems to me a hazardous course. I do not think that we can learn any more from the two or three good novelists of that period. You must not forget that unfortunately all German prose writers since Kleist have studied Hebbel and the well-known Romantics. In the course of a hundred years the usual epigone literature has thus arisen. Believe me that everything which *these* writers could in general give to the next generation has been for some time popular, trivial and stale. You must also not forget that Kleist himself was for his time an exceptional phenomenon, and not altogether in a favourable sense. Apart from some great traits (particularly in 'Homburg' and Kohlhaas), there is so much that is artificial, abnormal, tortured, intentionally original in his writings (which our critics of course have never quite discovered), that he can hardly serve as an example except for mannerists (Thomas Mann). You must also remember that that period (up to 1830) was not sufficiently advanced to develop an art form of the novel of a national type. For, in my opinion at least, a century of mature art, particularly

the dramatic, is a prerequisite. The Kleistian form is too primitive, even for Germany, but above all in comparison with the general European stage of culture. At that time Stendhal was writing his 'Italian Stories'. If one excepts C. F. Meyer who had learnt from Italian models, all the German 'Novellen'[1] writers (Storm, Keller, Raabe, etc.) suffer as the result of following imperfect German patterns. Whoever wants to write something really *good*, and I think that significant 'Novellen' for some time now have been within the bounds of possibility, so also, for example, good dramas (decadent, you understand) must really choose other models.

In the case of the German theatre this would not be necessary, but for novels and short stories this is unavoidable. If you allow yourself any reading outside ordinary stories of professedly 'German taste' try some of the foreigners, for instance Balzac (*Les Contes Drôlatiques*), Stendhal (*Italian Stories*), Cervantes (*Novelas ejemplares*), or a play by Otway, or Maturin's *Sebastian Melmoth*, and finally the lyrics of Baudelaire and Verlaine. Naturally not for the sake of imitating them, but to obtain an insight into what is *possible* in the way of lyrical poetry and short stories, and in order to learn to what a narrow range, and out of date at that, German writing has attained up to the present time.

Then you will begin to see that there are possibilities within the German sphere, having little or nothing to do with Paris, and still less with the very provincial type of short story (Novelle) which has been written again and again from the time of Kleist onwards.

Thomas Mann's sentimentality is so false because its roots are still fixed in the Romantic 'Belle-triste'. He writes what appears to be modern stuff, but with a perfectly out of date content (Biedermeier sensibility or Heine projected into capital city homosexuality). The reading public of course does not notice. So try to read something *quite* different, in order to escape from the traditional in material, method, and rhythm.

I am trying to set down in writing the things some of which I told you about. I think that I can be in Hamburg in spring and then it will be a pleasure to accept your kind invitation. I hope

that you will have something of your own to read out to me. (Don't forget the Altenlander sausage. You will be giving my material instincts a treat.)

N.B. What I have said about the Novelle[1] applies equally well to drama. You will discover that every important work represents in its form a type which was not thinkable thirty years before. Then compare Egmont, Tasso, Wilhelm Meister with the 1740 period, Mary Magdalena, Herodes, Judith in particular again with the early Romantic period, Rosmersholm (about 1880) or with the end of the Biedermeier period. On the other hand Fuhrmann Henschel, Wedekind's Lulu, Wildenbruch's historical figures are exact imitations of Ibsen, Dumas, and Schiller. Whoever wants to write anything lasting today, must be conscious of an idea which has not yet reached the general consciousness. For example, a form of tragedy which absolutely belongs to the twentieth century. Up to now nobody has discovered this. What is written today is, as I have said, in substance *imitation.* All third-rate writers can only feel and see what is already conventional in their time.

Verbose mood painting (Stimmungs Malerei) is a reminiscence of the Romantic Period.

[1] A 'Novelle' has been described as a short story describing a remarkable event.

1914

Munich, 25.3.14

I should have liked to have written again but I have been so deeply buried in my work,[1] that I forgot everything else. I want now to finish off the work at which I have been busy for two years, and every day the MS. gets a little further. The one or two ideas which I told you about, to your horror, are unfortunately the most harmless in it. But I will take care to make it hellishly difficult for others to contradict me. I shall not be able to visit Hamburg this spring at any rate. I know from experience that I could not work properly in the damp climate, and should have headaches most of the time. I shall go south in the summer to spend three to four weeks in going through the MS. again. How would it be if we went together, perhaps to the Riviera or to the Alban hills? You can't imagine how pleasant it is there in the summer without the tourist rabble. Perhaps the idea appeals to you, anyway think it over.

Have you already ventured on a short story? Then tell me about it. I call your attention to a practically unknown writer, Peter Hille, who died ten years ago in Berlin, literally in the gutter. Among his papers there was a fragment of a novel *Die Hassenburg*, which will amaze you. It is certainly the best prose writing in a novel that has appeared this year.

Give my regards to my friends and write again soon. Hoping to see you again in the summer.

[1] He is alluding to the first volume of *The Decline of the West*.

NOTE: When Spengler resigned, in 1911, from his post as a schoolmaster in a 'Real Gymnasium' at Hamburg, he had inherited from his mother a sufficient income to enable him to devote himself to literature. His securities were mostly American, and when the United States came into the war, he was reduced to extreme poverty.

Dresden, 21.5.14

I am living now with a friend (Weigel) and am industriously dictating my manuscript into the machine. From June onwards I intend to be in St Ulrich in the Grodnertal (1,300 metres, Dolomites, very cheap), living very quietly, in order to think everything out again. I should be delighted if you came there for a time to bear me company. St Ulrich is one of the most beautiful spots in the whole Tyrol; you would certainly like it. Write again soon.

Munich, 27.6.14

I shall stay over the summer here in Munich and finish the book. I shall be busy for eight weeks. I should be very much pleased if you came to Munich again on your summer travels. We could spend several days on a mountain trip and you would see several beautiful spots, which are little known and visited. I shall certainly avail myself of your kind invitation to Hamburg, but only when the manuscript is ready and there are only the proofs to correct. I will then have a good old lounge round Hamburg, which I have not allowed myself for years, and you must bear me company. I hope we shall meet one another here soon. All good wishes for Vienna. I strongly advise you to spend at least three days in Prague, and to wander off down all the old lanes, particularly in the evening and at night. On the way from Vienna to Munich—apart from Salzburg of course, there are the abbeys of Melk and Krems; the Danube trip upstream is very dull, there is *nothing* now of interest in Linz. Passau is much better.

Munich, 25.10.14

Forgive my long silence. Since I got your letter I have been meaning again and again to answer. But I was not in the mood so like much else I put it off. Today I have got your second letter and you shall have an answer at once. It is a bad period for me, not financially, I am not bothering about that now, and not because of the war. I am a thorough optimist. We shall win and in such a way that the great sacrifices will be richly compensated. The possession of Belgium alone, which will certainly remain

German, is an enormous gain: 8,000,000 inhabitants, a harbour on the Channel, a gigantic industry, and a very old civilization. Also we shall get what we need, an African Colonial Empire. The invasion of England is technically possible and is included in the plans of the General Staff. I assume that it will take place at the beginning of November. It is, so to speak, an ethical necessity of our historical development that victory should be made difficult for us. France realizes that this is her last war and the Grande Nation displays for the last time her best qualities, a sense of honour and personal courage: all the quicker will the marasma settle in in the coming years. What lies before us is unfortunately equally unconsoling, if one thinks and feels as a man of culture. The ray of inward culture from the time of Goethe, which had lost its brilliance after Sedan, since the Berliner has represented the north German type, has been completely extinguished by this war. In the Germany which has made its world position secure through technical skill, money and an eye for facts, a completely soulless Americanism will rule, which will dissolve art, the nobility, the Church, and world outlook, in a materialism such as only once before has been seen—in Rome at the time of the first Empire.

It is impossible at this time for me to concentrate on philosophical subjects. The manuscript is lying ready with gaps which cannot be filled until after the decision [of the war]. If I only had someone here with whom I could really talk. Here there is nothing beyond political and aesthetic gossip. I told you before that the level of the writers in Munich is deplorable. The dishonesty and mendacity of our daubers and scribblers exceeds my worst expectations. All who in July were abusing war, the nobility, the military, religion, Germany, in poems, newspapers and meetings, all the anarchists and Jewish nihilists, are doing business in patriotic ecstasy, naturally only so long as it is more financially advantageous than the other. The man who used to draw caricatures of our officers is now daubing a Hercules Hindenburg. Another, a Polish Jew who in July was holding literary evenings, when patriotism was treated as nonsense by speakers and versifiers, now runs patriotic evenings and recites

Körner. And everybody follows them. I doubt if there are ten people in Munich who are disgusted with it all. I am fed-up with living in the vicinity of this rabble. If I knew one or two people who would come with me, I would get a small house somewhere in the mountains, do a little gardening, and get my books printed, without coming into contact with any literary individual. In fact in order to find real worth, mental eminence and character today in Germany, you must look among the practical workers, engineers, officers and merchants. The voluble thinkers and poets are stupid, dirty and threadbare. This applies also to the younger generation at our universities.

I don't want to read any new books, and I am ashamed of the fact that I can only communicate my ideas in books. Certainly Hamburg has one advantage; it possesses a society of real quality. But unfortunately that is only possible today by having absolutely no connection with art and philosophy, and that is our dilemma, mine at any rate, A circle of friends of superior mentality *and* of high character is no longer attainable today in Germany or anywhere else.

I am again longing for the north. While the war lasts it would be quite unbearable for me to travel. When it is over Hamburg will be my first aim. You will hardly get to the front; the economic world situation sets a natural boundary to the war in the west, as winter does in the east. A time will then come for me when I can finish and get out of my mind what has been worrying me all this year. I must get rid of it and therefore it is hard for me here, to spend month after month without the possibility of talking freely, and particularly while I am half idle. Write soon again, dear Klöres, and tell me more about Hamburg. Are any of my old friends among the killed? Owing to my nervous weakness I am not bound by the conscientious obligation to volunteer. But I envy the people who can do so and then *experience* the war.

18.12.14

You must be angry with me for my long silence. I have in the meantime been suffering much from headaches and ill humours which have perpetually made me put off letter writing. At the

moment, when I cannot finish off a big piece of work, and do not dare to start upon another, it makes me very bitter that in this provincial Athens, there is nobody I can talk to on a serious subject. The two gentlemen you mention E and L are, not to beat about the bush, both of them Jews and commercial literateurs, they are entirely representative of the average German poet of these days; some intelligence, the business qualities of a traveller in the wine trade, the mental horizon of a 'skat' enthusiast. But the Munich average is lower still. For a long time I have taken no notice of these circles. As to what is written or sung about the war I am perfectly indifferent. If circumstances permitted I should like to spend the greater part of the coming year in North Germany in an atmosphere of unliterary soundness. I should like to wander round the Harz, Brunswick (my home), Westphalia, also Holstein and Mecklenburg, staying longer at some places in order to get on with one or two of my poetical things. I do not like writing about it, but one day I should like to tell you something about it. Instead of finishing the book, which you know about, I want to attempt something quite different, after which I have been hankering for a long time, and then could have become ripe.

I am following the war with great optimism. We are far too much inclined to apply to present circumstances the standard of 1870 when chance enabled tactical errors (Wörth and St Privat) to meet with success. Actually genius such as that of Moltke and Hindenburg for example does not meet with proportional success. Think of the type of wars such as those of Frederick the Great or the War of Liberation, both of which started a new epoch but which did not always meet with tactical success. Our position makes a quick offensive of the 1871 type impossible, apart from the fact that the dimensions of the war make it clear to the side in the inferior position (the French) that it is a question of an irreversible decision. It is always risky to try to prophesy details; the non participation of Italy for example caused surprise in Berlin. One thing is certain: this war is not a decisive event, but the beginning of a tremendous epoch, which perhaps will bring quite different catastrophes in its train. France and Austria will

appear here on the stage for the last time. The former from now on will assume the role played by Athens in the time of the Romans, and the liquidation of the south-east land masses will be a matter of the very near future. For us Germans there are unprecedented *social* crises ahead; a reduction of the standing armies, which is unavoidable owing to shortening the period of service and of training recruits, which will introduce into Europe a stage of militia armies, and this will necessarily give a different meaning to the word 'government'.

I only know of two epochs as important as the present—the history of Europe between the years 1789–1815, and classical history from Sulla to the death of Antony. These epochs left behind them a world changed to its depths. You will observe that the crucial decision in this war lies between Britain and Germany. The other Powers are only bottle-holders. The points at issue between Sulla and Marius, Pompey and Caesar, Octavian and Antony, were Rome and Alexandria (the Latin and the Hellenistic ideas) or, for the pre-formation of the coming cultures—the Arabic East and the Germanic West.

Germany has a mission similar to that of Rome. Look at the type of our soldiers in their field grey, which will become part of world history. No other army has anything so symbolic in its appearance. The Roman legions looked like this to the picturesque soldiers of the Greek and Punic armies, sober, unadorned, but profoundly in keeping. Only Napoleon's grenadiers had something of this great style in their outward appearance.

Whether we shall succeed in reaching London in this war (for the British a Zama[1]), I am not quite sure. I know that there is a plan to carry this out. If it is now not practicable, a second war against England will bring the victory which history demands. I will finish now, my headache won't stop. I hope this letter finds you in a good mood. Let me hear from you soon, as unfortunately we shall not see one another.

[1] Hannibal's army was wiped out at Zama; this ended the Second Punic War.

1915

Munich, 30.1.15

Forgive me for not answering your card at once. I am again suffering from headaches and absolute sleeplessness. Your calling up was a great surprise; in the new year I had begun a letter to you to converse with you in my mental loneliness. Now you are learning about the war for yourself.

It will be worth while to see with your own eyes at least the end of these great events. I assume that in the beginning of spring the long prepared last blows will fall and that early summer will see the armistice—a guess, nothing more. I reach this conclusion because large reserves have been collected on the lower Rhine which are not going to the front for the time being: recent events in France show that new methods[1] have been discovered to defeat trench warfare, so soon we shall have to reckon with open battles. The actual fruits of this decisive war will come to us in the next few years with secondary events, the necessary sequel of the first, which will completely change the map of Europe.

I will give you a literary idea which you might think about in trenches, or, I hope, in a café in Warsaw. . . . A novel in the great style, such as Paris produced in 1750–1850, could arise out of the immense events *after* this war. A novel should exhaust the whole life of an *epoch* (Goethe described the epoch of the enlightenment from 1749 to the end of Napoleon), a drama cannot do that. It is too mathematical in form, which excludes the full description of the unique features of the epoch. A novel can only attain strength through *richness* and for eighty years we have had no profoundly 'rich' men in our literature. At the moment I think anything of the kind impossible. Such a novel which places the epoch of

[1] The German attacks at Soissons and La Bassée failed. The Germans first used gas in April 1915.

William II in its relation to world destiny must be something else than the crude war romances with which we shall certainly be flooded. It must begin with the dying romantic (schwärmerisch) Germany, the last recollections of the time of Ludwig II, of Nietzsche, Leibl, Boeklin; it should take Munich of today as a starting point. Munich is the *old fashioned* town of Germany *par excellence*, which unlike Berlin lives on the relics of the artistic-romantic, and is therefore unfruitful. The spirit of Munich today is being finally dissolved in the spirit of Prussia. From now on, whatever attitude one adopts towards it, Germany means Berlin. The hero of the novel must go through this phase during the war. He must also up to this period have been an artist, too honest not to admit the art comedy of the present time, which no longer tolerates art, and in the sequel he must find in the important activities of life the philosophical motive which he could not find in Munich. He must therefore be one of the great practical organizers who from now on will represent intellectual Germany. The book cannot be written before 1920, but it can be planned already today, as a problem, so that only the detail of the (very numerous) types, ideas, events, crystallize in the next few years round the centre. Perhaps this perspective attracts you when you think at night over such matters, and perhaps at the front it is easier to get the necessary perspective than among books. I will write again soon.

Munich, 24.5.15

. . . I regret that you have already experienced the blackest shaded side of war—dirt, hunger, and boredom. I wish I could do something for you beyond comforting you with the assurance that it is only a question of months, and that later you yourself in the filth of a common soldier's life will have experiences which will be valuable to you. If I were well and had not a task before me, which in respect to my country is more valuable than any service I could, under the most favourable circumstances, render in active service, I would regard it as my duty to volunteer, in the meantime I could not physically endure a training period such as is now demanded, quite apart from my nerves. If however, contrary to expectation, this war were to last longer and even the

previously unfit be called up, I would rather serve under arms than in an office. In spite of all outward signs to the contrary I believe I can detect sure intimations of the end in spite of the criminal act of Italy.

It is a certainty that but for this recent event negotiations for an armistice would already, probably, be under way; that Italy will have a fearful awakening from her sordid heroic pose in certain: here, where Trient and the Dolomites are not far off, and one meets Germans who have left Italy, one knows that strong forces have been stationed in the Alps for months past . . . but one is also aware that public opinion in Italy is opposed to the Press, Parliament, and the war party. Believe me that here perhaps may come the end of the witches' cauldron of the World War; an awakening in Rome, and the infection spreading to Paris. So much is certain that the next few years will witness astounding events as the result of this explosion, also that the German nation is the only indestructible political unity.

I should like to tell you more about my work, but how am I to do so? I should work much more easily and far better, if I could interpose an occasional conversation *à deux*, but I can hardly express things in writing. Much can only be expressed poetically, and one day I hope to do that also. In the meantime I will send you a small parcel tomorrow, to improve somewhat your frugal fare.

Before everything let us hold fast to the hope of leading after this war a life devoted to The Idea, and one in which we can be of use to one another.

Munich, 7.6.15

Many thanks for your letter. I am enclosing three books; Ricarda Huch's for its excellent style, Büchner on account of the dramatic *form*, which conceals in itself possibilities for the future, and Dostoievski as psychologist of the nation, whose Czarism faces destruction as an unnatural form copied from the West, but also of the nation to which—perhaps in new forms—the succeeding millennium belongs, after we Germans have had the next few centuries for ourselves.

In these elements lies almost *everything* which our literature can still possibly produce: a new prose style, a form of drama for reading, a novel without a plot in the traditional sense.

Think of this when you are reading them. I am collecting now a series of notes for a *possible* literature of the future, in my opinion peculiar but important points. I should be delighted if I could soon read them aloud to you.

After the fall of Lemberg I expect that you up there will leave your positions and move southwards, so as to force the Russians into the interior of their country. The Italian affair is not without a comic side. The position is as if nothing had happened. Here in Munich, near enough to the armies of cicerones and swindlers, one hardly mentions them, so little seriously does one take them.

Munich, 14.7.15

Today for once I have no headache. So you shall have a reply at once to your last letter. The political situation? Yes, in that respect we have as little information as the Press of the neutral countries which is available to us. I am convinced, although the present war has no precedents (for instance the lack of influential neutral powers, and one is in the habit of taking one's opinion from them), that in spite of everything the end is not far off. After many years of preparation the war came in a week; it can hardly be otherwise with the armistice, suddenly the first step must be taken by one of the four allied powers, and then results will follow with the greatest speed. One thinks first of the position at the end of the Seven Years War, which also came to an end with surprising speed. Well as our army leadership knows how to keep its secrets, one has the feeling that Hindenburg is planning simultaneous flanking movements from Lemburg and Grodno to force the main body of the Russian army to a Sedan, and with such a man this is not impracticable. Such a catastrophe in the situation of Russia would lead to revolution. Another project which is often expected, but in which I do not at present believe, is an attack by way of Calais–Dover, although preparations have visibly been made, and the undertaking with the cooperation of our air fleet, U-boats and *ad hoc* constructed Krupp

guns is certainly not impracticable, and would make the deepest impression on England. So much is certain, that the leadership of the army is well aware of the necessity of a conclusion and is preparing accordingly. The capture of Galicia, which no one had thought possible, shows what it can do. I do not think it is right to complain of our diplomacy; there is much to be said on the matter. Reflect that we might take the example of Bismarck, exceptional as it was, as a normal standard. Abroad, as you know as a newspaper reader, German diplomacy for many years had been regarded as highly skilled. But in the first place did not Bismarck create the famous alliance Germany-Austria-Italy? In spite of the most optimistic anticipations was he able to prevent the defection of Russia and the Russo-French alliance? Did not all his efforts with regard to England fail? It is habitual to attribute to a diplomat what has been brought about by time. There is not one outstanding intellect in the quadruple alliance. It does not need one. It has come about from historical development even without King Edward. The great period of diplomacy was the eighteenth century, when dynasties could deal in countries like stock exchange shares. A man like Cardinal Fleury with his Jesuitical gifts could make and unmake alliances like any jobber on exchange. . . . The idea of the 'great powers' is coming to an end with this war; now there are only world powers, and besides us England and Russia, without our superiority seriously being called in doubt. After the decision of the war our diplomacy will work under more favourable conditions, for there will no longer be a conspiracy on all sides against the next power of the future. We hold now, or shall hold in a few years' time, the position which they have tried to deny us for the last 200 years. The policy which on all sides pre-supposed Germany to be the enemy will come to an end. From then on we shall find friends, for we shall have more to give than to claim. The greater Germany, the world power, cannot be ruled by Conservatives or Liberals in the old '48 style. Our parties are entirely changed; so is the entire setting. The real picture of the Reich *will* change in any case either through reforms or by force, and for that we need far-seeing minds, above all in the individual parties, but also in the

entourage of the Kaiser, even if they are clever Jews. We must not be too particular. Let us be clear that this Germany, which today is fighting against the world, is not the Germany of Goethe, but a second America. I for myself am sufficiently free from prejudice to regret it but to regard it as a fact, and in the future to set it before one politically and educationally as our aim, because it is the only one to which Germany can attain. Indeed I see something *great* about it. Don't forget that the Imperium Romanum was also only an unscrupulous business venture and the great Romans were all speculators. And nevertheless there is a certain beauty about them. I should like to be able to accomplish much for the future Imperium Germanicum. Huge dimensions add nobility to what on a small scale has a commercial appearance. . . . Now I should like to talk to you a little about literature. Keep my letters if you can, or send them back: so many subjects come into my mind when I am writing about which I want to continue verbally and that would be something for our evenings in Hamburg. I sent you Dostoievski for a particular reason. In his real novels he is half a Parisian decadent—for externally Russia is a corrupted imitation of western Europe. So far he is instructive; he leaves Zola far behind. Think of the Germans of the Merovingian period; then you have got a second example of the old Roman decadence which will create far more havoc in people of the future. I value the other Dostoievski, the mystic, the grown-up child, whom you will discover in this book if you read it carefully. He is like the oldest German poets of the Carolingian period (*The Song of Hildebrand*); he is epic, intuitive, incredibly profound. There one finds the new nationality (Russia is not the right word for it) which is ripening underground behind Moscow and in the next millennium when we Germans will have had our great period behind us (the Romans were only great for 200 years from the destruction of Carthage 146 B.C. to Vespasian A.D. 70), a new culture will come into being, just as we began something new in the year 1000 with the Romanic style, the Minnesingers and primitive painting, which today is withered, and the last stages of which we Germans are inaugurating. I find all that in Dostoievski; I know that most people do not find it but I think

that you will. . . . My hopes are centred on a new German master prose. I don't expect anything more from verse. A prose inheriting from Luther and Goethe, far removed from the snobbishness of Nietzsche, and including something of what I might call the Hindenburg style, short, clear, above all *natural*. This would be an excellent medium for the *new* substance of literature Remember that Latin, that master speech, did not exist in the time of Hannibal. We possess examples of the old language, prolix, poetic, vague. Rome the world power created this splendid language in the 100 years between the time of the Gracchi and Caesar—could not we also do that? . . . You know the ideal which is in my mind's eye. Ricarda Huch comes nearer to it than anybody else writing today. The speech must ring like a fugue, condensed, mathematical, logical, but in every word a deep melody which at the same time is a key to the atmosphere of the whole. No pictures, no more descriptions à la Thomas Mann. Not a word too much. That in my opinion should be our aim. If we do have an aim, something thoroughly manly and inspired, admittedly highly unpopular and inaccessible to the half-educated herd of our men of letters. . . .

In the meantime, my dear friend farewell and write again soon. Shall I send you any more books?

Munich, 7.9.15

My heartiest congratulations on your promotion! Now at last you have what you have so long desired: an opportunity for practical activity beyond the writing table. All we Germans of today have something of this longing to leave the thinker's study for real life. It is part of the epoch, which our people are experiencing inwardly. Like you I have wished often enough, instead of writing down my ideas for the future, to be able to carry them out at once, and there are long days when paper disgusts one, and I have the feeling that I must see my life spoilt because its whole reality is carried out on paper. Every really productive person must certainly have such moods, and I see in them evidence for a true vocation.

Anybody who can be eternally thrilled and satisfied by purely

literary activity, and does not at times find it a misery is most certainly either a dilettante or a nobody, like our typical men of letters of today, whose need for writing is like that of a caterpillar for leaves.... If *you* read the misunderstood *Tasso*, Goethe's most profound drama, you will discover deep down this self contempt of the 'mere writer'; Shakespeare had this feeling even stronger, for the caricature of the poet in Julius Caesar is self ridicule. One will always be envious of Napoleon, who *also* intended to write a novel, because he always was able to realize his ideas without any opposition. I read recently the biography of the much underrated writer Klinger (*Sturm und Drang* is his worst piece), who also yearned for action. When he actually held his commission as officer in his hand, he threw all his MSS. and notes into the fire and later looked back to this existence with repulsion (Napoleon also in later years had a repulsion towards people who wrote books; actually he hated his own youth). Klinger died with the rank of General in Riga.... I have gathered something from a short message from my friend Weigel, who has had a hard life in front of Nowo Georgiewsk (four forts in three days and twelve nights on the bare ground). He wrote from Germany, from where I do not know, that shortly no more news bulletins would be issued. From this and from information that I have heard here, I conclude that a landing at Calais at the back of the French, or on the English coast, or in the neighbourhood of Petersburg is being secretly prepared. The greater part of Linsingen's army was transported some weeks ago, nominally via Munich to Lille, and the masses of heavy artillery in the east are now also available. I avoid talking like this in Munich where spies abound (via Munich—Lake Constance) and all soldiers gossip about what they have just heard, but where you are I expect you know more....

Munich, 3.11.15

You must be displeased that I make such a bad use of my presumably ample free time as not to write you a letter. In the meantime the spectre of the call-up suddenly appeared close at hand. At the end of September I received the order to appear for

examination. You won't misunderstand me if I say that I was horrified by this turn of affairs. I often feel it is painful enough to remain in the background in this decisive period, but my work enables me to regard that as good fortune.

I have been rejected again as unfit (interior troubles)—after the war I must really think seriously about a diagnosis and a cure. I had suddenly noticed with horror how lightly I had regarded the liability that I should be prevented from completing my work myself. The greater and the best part is in packages of notes which would be illegible for anyone else, as nobody would discover the connection; most of it would therefore be destroyed, and I am convinced that it contains very important matter. If I had been called up. You know the strain of a hasty training, but here in Munich it is worse, so with my sleeplessness, severe headaches, and my frightful nervous sensibility, I should be ruined in a fortnight, perhaps for years. For the last few weeks I have been working day and night, literally right through the night, sitting by a candle owing to the lack of kerosene, trying to collect and transcribe whatever was possible, and getting a quantity of collections of notes ready for the printer. Nevertheless, it was for me a sort of walk to execution—it can't be expressed otherwise. Since this time I have become quite a new man, quite happy, untying the packets again for a quantity of new ideas. For weeks I have not seen a newspaper and know nothing—except that perhaps as a Prussian lieutenant you are going to see the pyramids (or have I got it wrong?)—as to politics I don't want to hear anything at all. But the *new* ideas introduced in October are the most successful I have had. Basically I have the feeling of a logic in affairs; that nothing which is intrinsically necessary in the development of the spirit is dependent upon absurd chances and could be destroyed—on the other hand that if one is convinced that there is a kind of mission in one's life work, there is also a duty to make the most strenuous use of one's time. In the next two or three years I will get the bulk of my book ready, and not, as I have done unfortunately up to now, hesitate and wait (out of dissatisfaction with the form or with details). You have received, my dear Klöres, a completely egoistical letter, of which fact you with your time

occupied in hard duty will be doubly conscious. Do not take it amiss, if it appears that I am trying to make you jealous of my life. It is really not very enviable. Headaches seven days in the week and literally not a person with whom I can discuss serious matters ('the only sensitive breast among masks'), that is more oppressive in a big town than in the trenches.

1916

Munich, 17.5.16

. . . One can now with some certainty predict the end of hostilities late this summer. I have in fact received discrete indications from someone who is possessed of important information in one of the great military press bureaux. We shall then experience an incomparable period. The era of Napoleon developed gradually in a series of wars between 1789–1815. In our case first came the war and then the political reorganization. Remember that the Customs Union (about 1840) was the first step in the founding of the Empire. With a central European industrial union, the sphere of which will extend from Brussels to Constantinople, something on the same lines will have been created. We shall see that Berlin will become the centre of gravity. Germany, being in a better position to arrange alliances than any other country in the world, will be the obvious centre of a group of powers, aligned against London–Washington. Probably another war is coming which will arouse the enthusiasm of 1914. It is unfortunately impossible to say any more in a letter (for Vienna is an important problem). In the last two years I have had the satisfaction of seeing my views—in my book—confirmed by the facts. That gives me the certainty that they were necessary. In the meantime I have gone on working and have arrived at different conclusions. So let us hope that in late autumn we shall be able to discuss these matters in Hamburg. I recently read Storm. It has given me a longing to stroll along the waterfront again without any drawbacks. Then as a Master of Arts I was affected by my antipathy to the manner of living that was forced upon one. . . . So till October!

Munich, 12.7.16

I was pleasantly surprised to get your letter from your home, unfortunately with less pleasing contents. I do not want to go

into this now, because my health, I mean in particular my state of mind, is now somewhat dubious, and I force myself *not* to think of certain things, in order to be able to work at all. I would only say to you that for the most part you are right, but that it is not a specifically German but a purely human attitude, appearing on many occasions throughout the years which is characterized by this difficulty. In the case of the Napoleonic army after Jena, the Prussian war of liberation in winter 1913, the German army in front of Paris in 1871, the recorded circumstances were in some respects quite different. Mental intensity like that of August 1914 is only temporary. Also it is not right to link a great world historical mission with the stipulations of a sort of ideal humanity.

The Romans were only once great—after Cannae. What was established *in later days* after intense historical study as the Roman type has a surprising similarity with what you say in your letter, particularly when one reads between the lines. Barbarism, dullness, greed, incapacity—think of the political and military defeats from 200 to Actium—are the rule, not the exception, and this does not only apply to the Romans. It is history in general. The ideal aspect, the symbolism of the great eras, the meaning of history, are things which are only visible from a long way off. As regards world rule, it is—I cannot explain it here, it is part of my book—a *negative* phenomenon, not excess of strength of one side, but lack of resistance on the other side. The Romans did not conquer the world. They only occupied what was politically dead. They never waged another serious war after Zama. This is the situation in the twentieth century. The war is only the unfolding of an era, the further stages of which cannot be foreseen in detail. The next twenty years will bring about what the war under different conditions might have accomplished: the *passivity* of all continental factors with the exception of Germanism. Political-commercial forms (do not forget that Roman military expansion was only camouflaged financial appropriation of property) the nature of which it is not yet possible to guess at the present time, perhaps accompanied by revolutionary crises, but *most certainly* centred on Berlin, controlled by a preponderance of Prussian intelligence, that will admittedly not be found in our diplomatic

circles nor in the auxiliary officers of today, but among those who led the army of 1914, our industrial, commercial and journalistic intelligentsia—and among the foodstuff usurers, a genuine Roman phenomenon.

You see, now I am reduced to babbling, but almost in despair. I can hardly stand any more, month after month absolutely cut off from serious conversation, working out things the range of which no one today can apprehend. I should like to get the first volume 500–600 pages printed this summer (not published) in order to be rid of it. It will surely enter contemporary literature like an avalanche into a shallow lake.

In spite of everything I hope that our meeting will not be put off too long. In my opinion the war is nearly at an end. Please, dear Klöres, let me hear something from you before you leave, also about your health. That would cause me much pleasure.

Munich, 12.10.16

. . . thanks also for the photographs. One sees no sign of the civilian about you, although you *still* are one.

You are quite right when you assign a very high rank to Russian literature. We must follow it with special attention if we wish to realize what are the possibilities of German poetry after the war, above all Dostoievski whom I am studying now. That he is universally misunderstood today is shown by the invariable habit of putting him on the same basis as western writers: Flaubert *and* Dostoievski, Ibsen *and* Tolstoi—so it goes on indefinitely. One might just as well say Giotto and Manet, for the distance between them is no less. Fortunately it has been discovered that Dostoievski is a mystic. But it is not perceived what this means for the meaning of the new Russian literature. What Dostoievski means for a *new* culture, that of the next millennium (which has nothing to do with the Czars and Russia as a great power) is what Dante and Wolfram von Eschenbach were for us; for the East it was Plotinus and the author of the Apocalypse. Tolstoi is a writer of epics. If one calls Dostoievski's novels dramatic in form, it is the same dramatic instinct which produced the *Nibelungenlied*. If one calls him morbid, then there is nothing more morbid than

Parsival. This epic period, which Russia has just experienced at its zenith (Gorki is a very significant epigone), came to an end for us in the fourteenth century. There there is drama which for us today is completely worked out as a form, and as a metaphysical possibility.

How artificial and forced were the efforts which Kleist and Hebbel had to make to produce a drama in the great style, which Shakespeare could do in his dreams!

Then the novel—that is something in the future for us. The French and English novel, tied to world cities Paris and London, is already exhausted (Stendhal, Zola), the German novel has not yet arrived. The whole of our literature looked at from the distance is a delayed appearance. Goethe went back to Shakespeare. Young Germany brought back Rationalism.

It seems peculiar that—for example—Stendhal and Hölderlin should be contemporaries. Our classicism is delayed Renaissance. Our lyrical poetry from Klopstock to George is a repetition of what French poetry had accomplished, slowly and at length in the three centuries from Ronsard to Verlaine. Our miserable fiction has been up to date an imitation of western forms (exactly like the lyrical poetry of the baroque period). Finally, Dostoievski and Tolstoi also accepted the western shape as a model, but that has had no effect on the inward shape. But we have no inward shape for the German novel. . . . Here there is a great possibility. The preliminary conditions for a novel: highly developed intelligence, world outlook, wide dimensions, world city psychology, a treatment which does not trace the development of an amiable provincial but a man of historical consequence, all this is within the bounds of possibility today. In 1870 there was no question of it. Then we were provincials. In this respect there is much to be learnt from the Russians, *not* the *mysticism* but the *wide scope.*

Actually we north Germans psychically and physically are more closely related to them than we are to the English, in whom since Shakespeare's days the Celtic strain has become more and more predominant. . . .

You ask when I am going to get printed—I have been thinking about it myself. I will get it done in a few weeks' time, although

publication, naturally, will be after the war when a book which makes *very* severe intellectual demands will find the milieu for which it is intended. In spite of my pessimistic moods, to which I am subjected by the lack of conversation, I still believe that my ideas will have an epoch making effect. They formulate precisely what in the spheres of art, philosophy and politics has been sought after everywhere for the last thirty years and not found. For the rest I agree with you, that we can expect an armistice before Christmas. The peace negotiations with Russia in summer reached an advanced stage. Then they collapsed, on the question of Erzerum.

After the scandalous comedy of Rumania, which has its counterpart only in Italy, one has the feeling that the resumption of negotiations would be a natural step. In spite of the official pronouncements, one feels that there is no serious intention of a spring offensive. Recognition of the fact that the Battle of the Somme has miscarried cannot be long delayed.

Not the conclusion of peace, but the developments during the next ten years will determine the *actual* results of the war.

NOTE: Between January and July 1916 the Russians seized the whole of Turkish Armenia.

Munich, 21.12.16

. . . I have stopped my ears against politics in order to be able to work. I am convinced that our offer[1] will be the beginning of the diplomatic side of the campaign. Naturally a plain yes is not to be reckoned with. Above all, since the war is dragging to an end we have forestalled an analogous stop from the other side.

After prestige has once been secured by words and assurances from the other side, the way for further discussion will stand open.[2] Anyhow the peace question will now permanently remain in the foreground, particularly when the form of a conference has been determined. In my opinion the spring campaign will be replaced

[1] Spengler is probably referring to the German 'Peace declaration' of 12.12.1916. Germany asked the USA to inform the Entente that she was prepared for peace negotiations. There were no concrete proposals.

[2] On 21.12. President Wilson approached the belligerent powers and the neutrals for their views as to peace conditions.

by diplomatic chess moves. In Paris and Rome there is no inclination to wait much longer. At least that is my view. The thought of what will have to be gone through afterwards has suddenly occurred to the general consciousness.

Will you not come to Munich, dear friend. I have such good memories of the Landshut days that I should like a repetition. But—bring a bag of provisions with you. Now good-bye.

With best wishes for the new year, for your health and your future plans.

1917

Munich, 6.1.17

Today I got at the same time your letter and the cakes. It was wonderful of you! I haven't eaten anything like that since those splendid days at Landshut. . . . At the moment I am again in the mood in which I find all my philosophizing extremely unnecessary and dull and I should like to take on something real, poetical for example. Unfortunately for various reasons that is quite impossible for me at the moment. I am glad that you are able to extract some profit from Stefan George. He really belongs to the line of development from Klopstock to Liliencron, and it is only *after* him that new lyrical possibilities begin; but in the 'nineties he was the only outstanding writer of lyrics that there was. That he does not appear unfortunately in Lang's collection is of course due to the fact that the Master does not permit such a profanation of his poems. However you will gradually discover the excellent sides of Lang's collection. It is the only one in which one can really study the progress of German versification. Its beginning lies in the Seven Years War; so I should like to call it a specific Prussian poetry. (German poetry begins before Hans Sachs.) At that time there was an awakening need for a *national* poetry, which the western countries had had for centuries. For the want of a formal tradition this lyric was partly connected with the ballad, partly with foreign art forms, which it variously imitated. This last tendency, to which George and Platen subscribe, has from the beginning something Alexandrine. Liliencron is on the other hand the last representative of the ballad type. When you examine them you will notice that *both* possibilities have exhausted themselves in this century. After Hebbel a certain tendency to repetition and to the exaggeration of nuances becomes more and more evident. You will notice this clearly if you compare

Brentano, Freiligrath, and Platen with George. It is obvious that alongside this organic development of an art the absurdities of Dehmel, Holz, Zweig, etc., do not come under serious consideration.

But, for my part, I am convinced that the German language—*alone* of all the west European—still has lyrical possibilities, which naturally postulate a different world feeling than that of George, which derives from A to Z from the German Romantic of 1800. Weigel, as you know, has made a stout beginning. In a few, *very* few poems, Nietzsche excels George (*The Song of the Gondola*, *The Island Of Graves*), above all he has a rhythm rich for the future. The basic weakness of George (apart from the fact that his admirers have turned him into a serious clown) is his lack of intelligence. The *coming* lyric is not compatible with narrow views. One must feel the world beneath one's feet, if one wants to be of any account in it, and not cautiously go round about it. The entire group Klopstock-Liliencron-George has a naïvety which is no longer permissible. Kerner, Mörike, Novalis were all children; Nietzsche was the first *grown-up*. As in everything else, Goethe, in the second part of *Faust*, has anticipated much.

As regards Frau F. (Förster-Nietzsche) you are quite right. She only understands men like her brother and Wagner up to a certain point. One knows all about this, if one understands how to interpret her writings. Every time I read them it gives me a special pleasure, as I can see through the provinciality of her nature, a quality which was shared to a certain extent by her brother. Cosima is a woman of the world. She has apparently written something in the nature of a memoir, but one will only gather from it what she wishes one to gather, nothing more. Nietzsche himself was in their circle the complete provincial, very sincere, very sound. I can so well understand the breach between them. The society circle (Bülow, Malvida, Liszt, the various countesses) delighted him. He was vain and was ashamed of the academic style of 'Unzeitgemässen Betrachtungen' (Untimely Reflexions). In 'Menschliches, Allzumenschliches' (Human, all too human) he became a drawing-room philosopher, but did

not succeed in that capacity. Today I find this first book of his infinitely comic, and Cosima's[1] verdict, who perceived at once what in it was false and inadequate, to have been entirely correct. Indubitably she never forgave him for selecting Wagner and some others, who up to then had been treated with respect and had reciprocated it, for victims of his superficial sentences in imitation of Chamfort. I am sure that after this she never read his *really* important works.

When you know Shaw better, you will certainly place him on a par with Ibsen, Strindberg, and Nietzsche himself. I have never heard that said, but I am making no mistake. As a dramatist it is self-evident that he is of no importance, but as a philosopher of the Socialist school he is in the first rank. When one translates from the Zarathrustra style into reality Nietzsche's cloudy romantic effusions about the Superman (which quite clearly are Darwinian in origin), one is at once in the realm of social-political theory. In this respect Shaw is *the* writer who completes the work of Nietzsche, as in the erotic he is the superior of Hebbel and Strindberg. There also (like George) he is the end of a development, beyond which there is still work to be done. Unfortunately it is difficult to go into that in a letter. Do you want any more books? If so I will send you something else by George, three volumes (the best) of Shaw, etc.

Munich, 14.2.17

Just returned from Landshut. I received the news of the sudden death of my elder sister with whom I was on very intimate terms! My poor sister in a state of mental derangement ended her life in a very sad way. At the same time I received a calling-up notice. I was medically examined this morning and found fit for office work. I cannot write any more. You will pardon me.

NOTE: His sister Adele committed suicide in a mood of depression, fearing that she could not succeed as a musical composer and virtuoso.

[1] Cosima, Liszt's daughter, first married the pianist and conductor, Hans v. Bülow, and afterwards, in 1870, Richard Wagner. She died in 1930. She and Spengler met.

[1917]

Munich, 20.2.17

Many thanks for your letter. Slowly I am coming to terms with what cannot be altered, and I am trying by concentration on certain work to distract my thoughts from painful pictures. Since Christmas I had a dim feeling that something was awaiting me, that I ought not to leave Munich, and that was the chief reason why I kept on postponing my visit to Landshut.

But let us talk about Julien Sorel[1] who impressed you as much as I expected. For me it is *the* modern novel, and I cannot rightly understand why today, as is in fact the case, *Madame Bovary* is more highly thought of, and has more influence than any other. Without wishing to deny Flaubert's high qualities, I must remark that with him it is purely a question of an artistic performance, and that his importance derives from his style, his language, and quite secondarily from the famous *petits faits*. Imagine the novel related by someone else, without a claim to style and language, it falls back at once, so I feel, into the same class as a great many other works. As for psychology regarded separately: today it is a universal art. I can well understand why *Jewish* novelists in particular, imitate Flaubert. Stendhal as a model is beyond their reach. A Jew like a Frenchman has intelligence and technique. He can be an artist but not more. Stendhal, on the other hand, who has something quite *German* about him and certainly is a source of secret perplexity to the true *esprit gaulois*, can achieve more than this. When you have got to know this novel, the level of which Balzac tried in vain to reach, you will understand what I mean when I say: a great novel must exhaust an epoch. *Wilhelm Meister*, the *Liaisons dangereuses* and *Rouge et Noir* do that, Flaubert does not: it is significant that *Salammbô* follows *Madame Bovary*: an arbitrary theme, after technical mastership has been 'achieved'. This sort of procedure is out of the question for a German who is not merely writing novels but wishes to incorporate a *period* in a novel; you must acknowledge I am right in this.

You will regard the task of forming an artistic conception of the period, shall we say 1890–1925, as possible, and will realize that basically only one form is adequate for the purpose. Apart

[1] The hero of *Red and Black* by Stendhal.

from Tolstoi and Dostoievski, *only* Stendhal is capable of this form, apart from him Zola, Flaubert and Balzac are out of the question. Moreover, it is significant that both Zola and Balzac, who had the ambition to sum up their period, wrote dozens of novels, a clear admission that they could not achieve what Stendhal had achieved. It suggests to me a portrait painter, who makes twenty sketches, because a single one does not bring out the likeness. If you read the *Confessions*[1], one of my favourite books, of all memoirs the only one I would put on the same level as Goethe, you will experience the genesis of *Rouge et Noir*; there is the same connection as between *Wahrheit und Dichtung* and *Wilhelm Meister*.

Munich, 25.2.17

What good advice you give. I wanted to ask you to send me some bonbons, for which I have the appetite of a fifth-former but I was slightly ashamed. Many thanks (also in recent weeks I have received a packet of gingerbreads and previously a *Dauerkuchen*). Best thanks to you and your respected Frau Secretary (to whom I should like to be remembered) for the beautiful views. Yesterday I stood 1½ hours to get 200 grams of cooking bacon; for this my meat tickets for 1½ weeks were used up, nor can I eat in restaurants. On Wednesday I stood ¾ hour to carry off a little packet of saccharine, the second since new year. These are veritably philosophical situations. Nevertheless, since the beginning of spring I have an unmeasured desire to bury myself rather in the possibilities of *the* novel. . . . I have no more doubts about certain of the main lines. Above all it is an absolute impossibility for me to make any sort of love story in any way a main feature of the action. It seems to me that it is precisely this which prevents the coming into being of important novels. If one takes as a basis the freak of nature as to whether Hans does or does not get his Grete, one is excluding a great deal, under certain circumstances the most important part. It does not matter whether the erotic is treated in the style of *Nora*, of *Hedda Gabler*, of *Madame Bovary*, or any other way; there are epochs which are non-erotic in nature

[1] Stendhal— *Souvenirs d'un egotiste.*

or rather so constituted that their essence cannot be brought out in the love story of some woman. Nevertheless there is a dogma! No romance without a love story. Perhaps you have different ideas on this subject so I will pose the question subjectively, but it is a subject which is worthy of consideration. Don't you think that both Stendhal's books are an incomparable example showing that the spirit of an epoch can be dealt with exhaustively in a single novel? I have read both several times and I read one always in conjunction with the other. Another writer would have treated the motive of provincial life (the Renal family—Mme Bovary), clericalism (Julien in the seminary—Zola, the sin of Abbe Mouret), Paris in 1830 (the house La Mole-Balzac), etc., in a series of novels, and even then have missed the actual symbolism. Is it possible to imagine the biography of a German of sufficient gifts and outstanding talents to represent the present time by a masterly combination of contemporary and personal affairs? Read it again bearing in mind the technique and the problematic. Remember that in the background there is the Napoleonic era, in the same way that in our background there is the World War. It is a pleasing thought that among the many basically perished arts in Germany, there is one yet to be discovered.

Munich, 3.3.17

A parcel has arrived in good condition and was unpacked with feelings of naïve joy which you will remember from your student days when a maternal food parcel appeared.

I am again in a really productive mood, and have written down or expanded a number of good philosophical points, and have thereby achieved the belief that they are thoroughly worked out and that the underlying theory is clearly stated in all its aspects, also that they deal with matters which may well be above the level of the new period. I believe I can say this without vanity. I also get this impression by occasional study of *The Decline of the West* (manuscript). I very much longed for the possibility of a few hours of daily discussion with someone, in order to make comfortable progress in a fair copy of a little book to follow the other.

In the closing stages of the work, which in themselves are comparatively easy, I find that being alone is an obstacle difficult to overcome. The subjects of their own accord are very slow to conclude, it is a matter of order, arrangement, and finishing off, but something prevents me from getting on with the last named. *One* year, without mental depression and with appropriate society, and I should have the whole gamut of my thoughts in ten small volumes ready for the public. My dear Klöres, if only you could help me merely by the possibility of discussion. Believe me, however accidental everything in my life appears to have been, when I look back on it today, it all becomes necessary. I left Hamburg just at the right time and have been cut off from any intellectual society just long enough to let things ripen. But now I *need* company, not occasional visits, but as a daily habit, a 'salon' in the style of the *ancien régime*, but without women.[1]

1.5.17

I think now that I shall come to an understanding with Braumüller. If that comes off, the first step will have been relatively easy: getting one of our best university publishers within four weeks in these abnormal circumstances for the first book of an unknown author. The conditions will probably be: no honorarium for the first edition, honorarium for the second, and a guarantee on my side for any deficit after a fixed time. I consider this very justifiable from the point of view of the publisher and thoroughly acceptable to me. I hope that this will conclude the anti-chamber correspondence. I found business letters on such matters very depressing and distasteful. The next work *Romans and Prussians* is making progress. It contains some astonishing material. With reference to it I have been reading some war literature, that is to say, of course, writings by well-known names and of a corresponding level. Nevertheless, the lack of understanding is beyond imagination. All the lines of thought of the nineteenth century are preserved and only the words have altered.

[1] Spengler said in later life that his struggles with *The Decline* had prevented him from marrying and leading a normal happy life.

I have quickly come to the conclusion that I need not waste my time on this literature. Perhaps they will think the same of me! As regards fundamental views today I have the consensus omnium against me, except that the spokesmen all belong to the past generation and the younger generation have yet to speak. I am glad you liked the book by Leroux.[1] Do not overrate the great men of 1889. Apart from Mirabeau they were almost all charlatans, possessing the great gesture, which in Paris and Italy always decided the issue, then as now, brilliant speakers, babblers, but shallow and narrow. The legend of the Revolution has bestowed on them a halo of glory; seen from this point of view Robespierre and Danton were men of the kind every period produces by the dozen but without their extremely favourable opportunity of playing a part on the world stage. The Germans lack gestures. They are not suited to Büchner tragedies, but they are heavier weights (Stein for example is certainly no theatrical figure). What are not found and cannot be found today are the great figures of a culture. In 1800 Kant, Goethe and Beethoven were alive. We are not sufficiently far off and we lack opportunity to estimate the political and strategic intelligence available: events after the war will decide that. Politics during the war are naturally conducted in the old style and by men of the old stamp (and not only in Germany). I however believe in a level of political thought and action in the *new* Germany which will be comparable to that of the French Revolution, however high you rate the latter. How do you like Allenstein? How are you? Write me soon an up-to-date letter, something about Stendhal. The Inselbucherei have published Taine's famous essay on Balzac.

Munich, 21.6.17

I hadn't thanked you yet for the *much* longed for parcel from Rostock, because I was waiting day after day for the settlement with the publishers. I have settled with the firm of Braumüller, now that the two opinions from whatsoever authorities (historical

[1] George Sand in her *Vie* mentions a Pierre Leroux from whom she learnt about *L'humanite toujours progressive. Dieu eternellement revelateur et revelable.* Herr Koktanek thinks Spengler may have meant Lenôtre.

and philosophical) it considers necessary have proved very favourable (and given me a foretaste of the insipidity of future reviews). The conditions, no honorarium for the first edition and guarantee for a deficit after a certain period, under the extremely unfavourable circumstances are acceptable, as the publishers are confident of success. I want now to get finished with the proof reading. Forgive me if I stop after this announcement, I have a severe headache, and do not feel up to a historical-political tractate.

Munich, 9.8.17

I am delighted with your journalistic prospects and I hope they are completely fulfilled. There is at this moment a possibility of rising in this way to a full scale political activity. For this the German change of government[1] is of an importance which has not yet been grasped by the public. Nowhere have I observed the slightest perception of what this event really means. It is a symptom of the immense discipline and organizing power which is inherent in Prussianism—so much one can well understand. But for me the important point is that thereby Socialism as a party has passed its zenith. *De facto* all parties are now socialistic and the extreme left thereby enters a different relation to public opinion: it no longer represents an *idea* but a class. It therefore loses its charm for the intelligent members of the younger generation. If the war had ended in 1915, its after-effects would have afforded European socialism great opportunities for success; as things are it reached its summit during the war this summer, and in the tempo with which events are developing, it has already passed it.

It will soon become obvious that the parliamentary form and with it the franchise question are out of date. There is no alteration in the meaning which the public attaches to parliamentary government, or as to the powers of the Reichstag. The political factors today are so different from the visible part of the government machinery that 'representation of the people' and 'diplom-

[1] Bethmann Hollweg was dismissed at the instigation of the High Command and Dr Georg Michaelis became Chancellor in his place.

acy' have only a passive meaning (which the 'representatives of the people' naturally do not notice).[1]

I am very much interested in your pamphlet. The idea of activity in Berlin as a publicist would not be unattractive to me. My own literary work is so stagnant owing to lack of inspiration and the grey monotony of my existence (I play chess in the evenings in order to get some recreation) that work of this kind would get things going again. I need such an atmosphere of activity around me, not always, but now. In the meantime I am extremely sceptical as to the amount of good I should do. It is a *bad* mistake of all publicists that they equate the publication of their convictions with an advantage to the cause they are advocating. Every businessman knows that *silence* is part and parcel of success. Supposing for example I was to put my views as to the future of German Imperialism into print, I would merely be supplying foreigners with material as to the 'real feeling in Germany' (that is the only actual effect of our war-literature of 1914–18), while the people who matter do not stand in need of this sort of writing, and the public neither reads it nor understands it. If on the other

[1] In *Prussianism and Socialism* Spengler gave his views about parliamentary government. He admitted that it had never existed in Germany. The Government of the German Empire was not responsible to Parliament. (Votes of censure were passed by a large majority on the occasions of the Kaiser's interview with the *Daily Telegraph*, and of the Zabern affair, but it made not the slightest difference.) The word 'party' meant something quite different in England. Parliamentary government was an organic English institution and could not be copied without the conditions of the English 'Viking character', and centuries of experience. In Germany the opposition wanted to overthrow the Kaiser, in England it was a different list of names who would carry on the same form of government. In the heyday of English parliamentary government all members of Parliament came from the governing class, and party differences were largely a part of the deception, the fable convenue, preserving a picture of popular government. The English since the days of the Norman Kings have been Republicans, whereas the Germans believe in absolute monarchy; thus the English like to think that their government represents the people which, except in a very small area, is a physical impossibility. Actually individual members of Parliament have little more power than voters.

'The fact that the democratization of England in the nineteenth century was only apparent, and that the people were actually governed, as in Prussia, by a gifted minority, distinguished for its integrity, and for its practical qualities, maintained a high level of ideas, and the ability to carry them out, until the outbreak of the last war.'—Tr.

hand I wished to take advantage of the occasion, for it is only a question of occasional literature, I would have carefully to express an opinion complying with a certain definite trend which has no connection with my own real opinion. Of that I am incapable, because I cannot produce two kinds of literature at the same time. One can only do that if one is a publicist, and only what is called a politician, a professional in the most modern manner who in a book or a speech *calculates* word for word like a merchant making a business report. *That* would be your job, you must be absolutely aware that your intention is not to philosophize but to achieve an effect; if you could establish our ideas, you would be doing a lot of good; but you must not forget that today this occasional literature lacks a higher standard, and that philosophy, even if it does not govern the theme, must be present as an unspoken basis.

By this combination of cold calculation of the effect on public opinion and of a wide ideal horizon you could quickly rise to a high position.

In the meantime I have also read the two almost unknown works of Stendhal. They are neither of any value, a collection of details, perpetually repeated, from Paris society 1820–44 with no plan, no form, no composition. *Armance* is Stendhal's earliest attempt at a novel, rightly little regarded in Paris, and *Lucien Leuwen* (uncompleted) is written *after the pattern* of Julien Sorel, but not finished, no doubt from a justifiable feeling that a core is lacking. Actually one can read every chapter singly, and one can foresee almost every sentence from one's knowledge of the two great novels.

1918

Munich, 16.1.18

Very many thanks for your parcel, again you have sent just what I wanted. Unfortunately I cannot reply in kind—my book is coming out in a few weeks' time. I have solved the difficulties and I have sent off the last batch of proofs. Therewith after the depression of recent weeks I am an optimist again, in other affairs as well as my own. But believe me, I regard the book with mixed feelings. I can't summon up the joy of an author. I am much more clearly conscious of failings in the design, the style, and the arrangement than I am of the significance of the ideas. As the result of internal and external pressures, loneliness, lack of inspirations from others or from journeys or experiences, I did not reach the level of performance to which I felt I ought to attain. This worries me at the present time, firstly because my first book contains mistakes and weaknesses, secondly because I do not dare now to go on with other things, which I see quite clearly before my eyes, but which at the present time I should only spoil. And nevertheless—how can I let time pass away to no purpose? I have still so much to do.

I can well understand your mental depression; you must not deceive yourself by thinking that the base, stupid, infamously prosaic quality of the war of which we are conscious from our surroundings belongs only to the present time and to our own circumstances; rather it is universal. I have recently been reading an excellent book that reminds one in many ways of the present time: Stendhal's letters with an exceptional introduction by Schurig. People's utterances in the days of Jena, Wagram, and Moscow had a surprising similarity with our contemporary mood. Get the book, you will learn more about Stendhal than you will from the *Souvenirs*. You will find many hints for a possible

German novel of the great future. The basic mistake of the ideologue in trying to experience great events from close at hand with the same clarity as from a distance afforded by history was visible also in him. It led, as it always does, to disgust with the world, to resignation, and to underestimation of the value of giving oneself a moral build-up. That is the German in him. The Frenchman is protected from this by his vanity and lack of scepticism in regard to himself. The German is a thorough sceptic. He cannot become passionate without laughing at himself after a time. Remember our Sedan celebration about 1910! We do not understand events in which we ourselves take part. Four years of war fever—that is quite unthinkable, while the Frenchman never tires of his knightly gesture. We have had enough of the great situation and grumble therefore at the great things we have accomplished, just for the sake of bringing forward the unfavourable aspects. It was the same in 1814 and 1870. But as a philosopher one ought to regard this mood simply as such, and not take it for an objective valuation.

Munich, 20.4.18

At last I have got the first copies and I send you yours. Read it slowly! As the introduction a year ago met with your approval, I trust you will also like the rest. Remember, however, that only a beginning is made in this volume, and that the world picture will only be completed by the second volume and some minor writings. Unfortunately I have not got the nervous energy to venture yet on a final fair copy. . . .

Munich, 11.5.18

. . . Many thanks for the much desired material form of your report. You have rightly guessed my small needs, particularly with the tea. You know that it is a sort of magic remedy for my nerves and my philosophy, and for weeks I have been looking sadly at my small stock.

In my book you will miss a number of themes which we discussed in those enjoyable days at Landshut (do you remember

them?) Some of them appear in the second volume which will appear in two years' time. . . .

As regards the war I think that the end can be expected in summer or autumn. Then after disarmament and political demobilization a mighty development will begin when the actual results of the epoch will appear. The war after the war, to employ the fashionable phrase, will consist in the abdication of the Latin nations, a factual German protectorate over the continent (as far as the Urals) and a quantity of other effects, to foretell which today would make anyone laugh.[1] For the rest I consider the German policy in the east in the three last months very clever and foreseeing. Behind the words 'guarantees', 'military assistance', and so on, a system is being established which holds much promise for the coming years. What would one have said six months ago, if anybody had prophesied this? German and Finnish, Esthonian and Ukrainian troops in conjunction in Wiborg, Narwa, Charkow, Rostow and Sebastopol?

Would you do me the favour of informing Dr Platz and others whom you consider might be interested in and understand my book. I should very much like to hear Platz's opinion.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Munich, 4.4.18

Aunt Matilda has told me the sad news. At this moment I cannot write at length. Like so many others you have been made to pay the heaviest sacrifice for our country, and I feel indeed that it hits you harder than many, for Fritz[2] and you, who have had an unusually happy life together, should not have been torn apart in so brutal a manner. I sorrow for you from the bottom of my heart, but I believe that the thought will help you over these hard days that Fritz, in respect to you, and to his profession, so also

[1] After the ratification of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk (16.3.18) Russia evacuated Poland, Lithuania, Courland, Livonia, Esthonia, Finland, and the Ukraine. At the beginning of May the Crimea, and territory as far as the line Rostow-Gomel, was occupied by German and Austrian troops.

[2] Spengler's brother-in-law, Fritz Kornhardt, had been killed in France.

as a soldier has done his duty to the uttermost with selflessness and even self sacrifice, and that this last and greatest sacrifice will not have been made in vain.

If I can help you in any way or carry out any wish you may have, do let me know. I should be delighted if I could do you any service either now or in the future.

And keep up your courage, dear Hilde, for your own sake and for the child's. Try to find in the irrevocable a source of comfort, the remembrance of the fine and heroic, and for the future of your child look for a continuation of life which does not entirely belong to the past. When you find time, please write to me if it is only a couple of lines. Let me assure you again that Fritz' death affects me deeply and that I am deeply sorry for you.

Spengler to Walther Rathenau

Munich, 11.5.18

With this I am venturing to send you a copy of my first book *The Decline of the West*. I am doing this in the hope of obtaining the opinion of an eminent practical thinker in respect of an essentially abstract line of thought, above all, also to express my gratitude for your writings *Towards a criticism of the period* and *Of coming things* which were, and still are, of the greatest value to me for a deeper understanding of the present crisis. Little as your concrete writings in themselves lie in the necessarily metaphysical path of a philosophy of history, you will not fail to notice, on reading this book, the connection with both of your articles.

It is my conviction today that, without my aiming at it or divining it in the first instance, a philosophical basis has been established here, without which, now that the nineteenth-century systems are exhausted, the political and social thought of the coming period cannot be complete. I hope and believe that a subjective and arbitrary element is absent. On the contrary, attention is called to the manifold trends in all branches of knowledge, which, in the course of the last thirty years, have, by their identity,

all pointed to one and the same dimly preconceived idea. This seems to me to provide the evidence for a deep-lying *necessary* philosophy, the inner substance of which is not disturbed by unavoidable individual contingencies. I would ask you, Herr Dr, to tell me something of the impression you derive from the book; I should be extremely grateful to you, if you could find the time and the occasion to write a public criticism, perhaps in a magazine, and thus call the attention to the book's existence of those who come into consideration as readers for a work of this kind.

Yours truly,
Dr Oswald Spengler

Walther Rathenau to Spengler

Berlin, 15.5.18

Together with your kind letter I received your book, the content of which holds forth a promise of important ideas and perspectives. In spite of overwork and the pressure on my time I will read the book, but it will hardly be possible for me to offer a criticism or a review of it, because the arrears of my own work take up all my spare time. Perhaps later you will find yourself in my neighbourhood, we can then find a free time for a conversation, if you will be kind enough to let me know beforehand.

With respectful compliments,
Rathenau

Spengler to Albert Erich Brinckmann

Munich, 23.5.18

I am venturing with this letter to send you a copy of my book *The Decline of the West*—outlines of a Morphology of World History—on the assumption that the views expressed therein on the Philosophy of Art will be of interest to you, and in the main meet with your approval. Although the book is concerned with the philosophy of history in general, and is therefore basically physical abstract and even metaphysical, yet as the result of a new

method and the posing of the problems, it is always in close connection with the most concrete facts, and has dealt specially with Art in the details of its form and development more thoroughly than hitherto has been usual or possible. It is my conviction that in this an important new turning has been taken. . . .

I should be delighted, professor, if you could find time and occasion to undertake the criticism of my views in the Press. I would be particularly grateful if you would call the attention of personalities who are interested in such matters to my book, to give me an opportunity of an exchange of views with them.

Yours truly,
Dr Oswald Spengler

Spengler to Oskar Lang

Munich, 14.6.18

. . . I have sent the rest of the manuscript to Fräulein Weigel, she will send it to you for safety's sake in small sections. If you cannot afford sufficient time and concentration to give me your impressions fully in writing, I beg you to let me have your most important objections (at least in outline). I feel sure about my foundations; one has to be born with the ability to take a comprehensive view. A development by reading and studying is only an apparent phenomenon; what actually takes place is the development of a talent of which one is unconscious, to a conscious mental form. It is different with the details. You are aware that I have been subjected to no criticism during these years and that self orientation through the books of others is only an incomplete substitute; moreover the lack of a library of my own has made it not always easy for me to consult literature to the extent which I would have liked. So I should be grateful if you expressed your opinions where they differ from mine. In many points our personalities differ. You are at bottom a romantic, and I am a realist. You reject many aspects of the civilization of the present time, whereas as they are unalterable I regard it as a kind of duty to recognize their force, without bringing my own taste into the foreground. The ideologist who makes the 'Meaning of

the Future' and the 'Aim of Mankind' suit his own taste is in a different category.

NOTE: This letter may partly explain Spengler's violent—violent to the point of childishness—views on politics. In a previous letter he said 'We must begin with the dying schwärmerisch Germany, the last memories of the time of Ludwig II, Nietzsche, Leibl, Böcklin.' The last three names are his own favourites. He feels that he himself, if not a German of the 'Goethe Zeit', or of the romantic period, or a 'Biedermeier provincial in his frock coat', has at heart more in common with them than with the German of his own age. Consequently he has to go on asserting that man is a beast of prey, and so on, to combat his other-metaphysical-self.

Paul Rohrbach to Spengler

Berlin, 28.6.18

I have read your volume regarding *The Decline of the West* with lively interest in spite of my original expectations. (I wrote to you that I have no receptive organ for philosophy.) To my regret I am quite unmusical and also without a trace of understanding for things mathematical. Indeed music and mathematics play an important part in your expositions. When these subjects come up I can at best only make a remote guess at what is meant. The rest that remains for me is however *very important*. It can be that I have at times occupied myself, if unmethodically, with similar ideas. Your basic principle for historical judgment I have never found in literature, and you indicate often and with special cogency that you are proceeding along new paths and bringing fresh products to the light of day. Nevertheless, various points suggest to me that I have surmised something of the sort before. I perceive that from your principle a complete reconstruction of our historical ideas must follow. I hope that your book will obtain many more readers. Without a historical education it is hardly understandable, and even professional historians will be in opposition. I would like to give it publicity but am frightened of falling down in the musical and mathematical questions. When can one expect the second volume? Will one have to have made a study of counterpoint and analysis for it also? To my modest way of thinking, your expositions, without the musical-mathematical sections, could be put forward in a relatively small space, and thus

produce an even stronger effect on the ordinary educated reader. I personally have an impression that I have understood your meaning without a musical and mathematical education. Perhaps it is a mistake and I have not entered into the true inwardness of your thoughts.

Spengler to Hans Klöres

Munich, 1.9.18

. . . I am delighted that *The Decline of the West* has had the desired effect upon you. If you study it again you will find also that many underlying thoughts, which do not stand out directly, are far in advance of the thinking of the present time. Much is quite evident to men of the present day, such as the structure of art history and the foundations of the historical in general. But metaphysical matters are alluded to which are very difficult to communicate, and in any case are not in keeping with a period where a scientific world outlook counts not as a passing *form* of thought but as an absolute and final possession. What I have to say finally on that subject I shall not publish for a long time. I shall rejoice if the lighter sides of my views quickly become commonly accepted.

I will send a copy to Pfitzner (many thanks for acting as an intermediary). His music, so far as I know it, is quite sympathetic, never shallow, but without temperament, without life. I can say nothing against it, but can well do without it. His books anyhow are utterly unimportant. A fatal situation, which fools seize upon, who attempt to palm off an exhausted art as an early stage of a new development, when they themselves represent the decay and do not realize it. But I should like to know what they think about my ideas in musical circles and therefore thought of Pfitzner, who certainly is not a poseur, and would honourably acknowledge the decrescendo. I have read nothing of Lamprecht . . . (it is physically impossible for me to read a historical work in twenty volumes). . . . He follows the old scheme of treating history only as political history and then treating art, learning, etc., afterwards in supplementary volumes. What I for the first

time have pointed out is that 'nation' like state, art, mathematics is only a *term*, that race forms like art forms are determined by the style of a culture and cannot as stationary substances be made the foundation of history. . . . The *Faustian* art is not bound together with particular races, any more than it is to particular techniques. The centre of gravity strays from Florence to Paris, from northern France to southern Germany as well as from oil painting to instrumental music. . . . Send me your manuscript, my dear friend. I believe that you have talents as a publicist of which later you will, I hope, be able to make use.

Professor George Misch to Spengler

Göttingen, 8.11.18

I got your work as I was called back home just before the collapse. I saw the book at George Simmel's. The title and the idea of a morphology of history appealed to me, because my thoughts about the logic of the history of the mind, derived from Goethe and Dilthey, crossed at this middle point. My expectations have now been fulfilled beyond all measure. I have only been able to read your work once but I know that here a great venture comes up for discussion.

My first pleasure is naturally that it proceeds on the same paths one was following oneself, then we have so much in common with what you say about time and about fate, your idea of the 'contemporaneous' (I had invented for myself the expression 'gleichliegend'), also individual instances of contemporariety, like Buddhism and the Stoa, in particular the metaphysical side of your vision, and the copiousness of your views. Much of it reads like fulfilment. Here the venture has succeeded. I am even more interested in the contrary idea that for you cultures are similar to growing plants, and so historical decisions fall into the realm of chance, that for you each culture remains isolated, that their individuality is regarded as something original, but if this 'demon' is established, it means that the moulding influence of life in culture only runs in new creations, that continuity loses its meaning, and for the heterogeneous to live together is not a specific

historical form of union and tension, but only masquerade. Here, where the historian is faced by the last riddle—the perpetual new appearance of individually directed action—seems to lie a disposition towards the philosophic feeling that Individuality, through its personal aims, shows itself to be separated out from Totality; as I once formulated many years ago: one cannot but see that a superindividual, but immanent, power, which is not rigid but free for productive action, concentrates itself in it (the individual) as an effective unit. . . . Herewith I am adding a question which may seem rather strange to you. In spite of your disapproval of professors of philosophy, may I inquire whether you would be inclined, in principle, to take over a chair of philosophy?

Spengler to Hans Klöres

18.12.18

Forgive me that I have left your letter from Hamburg so long without an answer. I have not been able to write because disgust and shame over recent ignominious events[1] have so overcome me that I have often thought I should not be able to survive. If it were not for my task which must be performed, who knows to what extremity my feelings would have reduced me.

It is not only our defeat, the collapse of everything which I have profoundly esteemed and held dear—for the war in spite of its result, is something of which we can be proud—but it is our behaviour during these weeks of the greatest shame that a nation has ever lived through, when everything which is called German honour and dignity, has been dragged through the mud by our outer and inner enemies, when we have proved that the greater number of us, without excepting any class, are a vulgar mob devoid of honour, deserving fully the contempt which foreigners display fowards us. I saw from close at hand some of the revolting scenes of November 7th and almost choked with horror. And then the way in which Kaiser Wilhelm was expelled,

[1] The military collapse, the abdication of William II, the proclamation of a Bavarian Free State, and the Armistice.

how every blackguard took it upon himself to throw dirt at the man who for thirty years unselfishly and with self sacrifice had co-operated for the greatness of Germany. I know well that the mob in other countries is beyond measure vile, but can it attain to our standard of vileness? Why must this fate come upon us? After the Seven Years War and after Jena it was necessary to start again from the beginning to guide towards its destiny a people which is hopelessly unpolitical, and that without appreciation and without thanks. What Wilhelm II is experiencing today, Frederick the Great and Bismarck had learnt before him. Today I can consider events more calmly. I see in the revolution a means which can avail us, if those who come into consideration for building our future understand how to make use of it. Like every revolution it is brought about by those who will become its victims; for its intellectual originators are the Radical Left, the *Frankforter Zeitung* and the *Berliner Tageblatt*, Erzberger and Scheidemann, who since 1916—so long have we been involved in a revolution—have undermined the authority of the State for such a long time, that at a breath of wind it collapsed without offering any resistance.

In the same way the French Revolution was the work of the privileged classes, the 'Parlements', the court nobility (the assembly of Notables) which so weakened the monarchy practically and morally, that in 1789 'le peuple' had nothing more to overcome. I see that the German revolution is following the typical course, slow abandonment of the existing order, violent disturbances, wild radicalism, subversion. What gives us hope today is the certainty that the monarchy will arise strengthened by this crisis. During the last two years of the war it was brought down so low by the senseless and shameless agitation of the majority in the Reichstag and the Press, that this was its salvation: the dearly bought conviction that it alone can rescue us from the morass. What will be accomplished by the programme of present day Socialism is precisely what the Hohenzollern State has always desired: the organization of production and of communications by the State; everybody to be a servant of the State; that is to say illiberal and authoritative forms of the most extreme kind. I

foresee that the old Prussian element with its incalculable treasures of discipline, organizing power and energy will take the lead, and that the respectable part of the working population will be at its disposal *against* anarchism in which the Spartacus group has a remarkable relationship with the Left Liberalism of the Jewish newspapers, pot-house pamphlets, jobbers, and doctrinaires. But that needs time. Like the French in 1793 we must go right through to the end in our misfortune; we need a chastisement compared to which the four years of war are nothing, until the corn is ripe for the small group which alike in 1813 and in 1870 was summoned to the leadership: the Prussian nobility and Prussian officialdom, the thousands of our technicians, literary men, craftsmen and workers with Prussian instincts; until finally too the Terror has brought to a head such a degree of excitement and despair, that a dictatorship, resembling that of Napoleon, will be regarded universally as a salvation. But then blood must flow, the more the better; a ludicrous complaisance in the shape of majority governments and toleration of all opinions, in accordance with the dreams of our ridiculous literati of the National Assembly, is absolutely impossible. First of all, force, then reconstruction, not through the agency of the dilettantism of political majorities, but by the superior tactics of the few who are born for and destined to politics.

And then I hope that the upheaval will have also so severely affected the Western Powers that the reconstruction of central Europe from us will create the position which is our destiny and in which I steadfastly continue to believe. Peace today is only provisional, it assumes continuance of arrangements which only represent an apparent state of affairs. Neither England nor France are standing any longer on firm feet. To say nothing of Italy. Actually the world war is entering a second stage, where developments proceed with other means than with millions of armed men. Therefore it is our duty, dear Klöres, to devote all our strength to the future of Germany; care and foresight is necessary. Much, which must be done, cannot be mentioned today.... *it is a mistake we make*, to ruin everything by confusing a necessary step with all manner of ideology, and therefore making it impossible—for

example the mistake of the Pan-Germans whose books have provided the hostile foreign world with material for creating opinions. My book has in the meantime, although not a single review has appeared, had a wide circulation, and had the effect for which I hoped. I have heard numerous opinions, which have pleased me because they show that I have been understood. Pardon my handwriting, my nerves announce themselves if I write for any length of time. If only I could travel, and escape from the oppression of this time! Write to me soon.

Spengler to Hans Klöres

27.12.18

Today I look with less apprehension on the future of Germany. The mob revolution is taking such a classroom course, as the result of the absolute theoretical and practical incompetence of the leaders, at such a rate that a speedy end is to be foreseen. I am keyed up waiting for the approaching fiasco of the National Assembly whose flourishing amateurism and majority ideology will be met by the machine guns of the Radicals. Anyhow this is the way to restore the reputation, which seemed to have been lost altogether, of the monarchy, the authority of the State, and the military power. So much is certain: the epoch of the world war has now only entered upon a new phase. . . . The master race, which from the time of Frederick William I has been bred by old Fritz, by 1813, and by Bismarck and Hindenburg . . . is faced by a new task to which it is equal. I expect much from the leader natures which today are hidden nameless in the middle class element and in the *respectable* working class. . . . Actually our future lies, on the one hand, in Prussian Conservatism, when it is rid of every trace of feudal-agrarian narrowness, and on the other in the working class, after it has separated itself in disgust and pride from the anarchistical radical 'mob'. Much blood must still flow, for decisions of that importance will not be arrived at by national assemblies and party programmes, and they need time to ripen.

1919

Spengler to Georg Misch

Munich, 5.1.19

I am much gratified by your agreement with my basic metaphysical ideas (Life—Time—Fate—Space—World), for I believe I have given expression to what is the more or less conscious direction of the thought of the present time. Only I would say that Relativism, or as I would prefer to call it, Scepticism, in the Faustian manner, is a necessary sequence of this way of thinking, and I hope, Professor, to be able to convince you of this. It is natural that Hegel (therefore also Dilthey) for his picture of World History should have had the impression that a stock of man's highest potentialities was steadily increasing and that a uniform purpose would gradually be accomplished, although I find already in Goethe conceptions[1] evincing the deepest scepticism. (It was from him and his prime phenomenon that I derived my idea of independent, plant-like, individual cultures.)

The insatiable historical voracity of the Western Mind began with Hegel. He himself relied entirely on the traditional view of history (Antiquity—Middle Ages—Modern Times). Actually an extensive knowledge of history finally leads of necessity to a perception of the void—in the artistic language of Goethe 'the beautiful purposeless game of Living Nature'. This is the unavoidable result. The standard of knowledge in 1820 supported the belief in something 'Absolute' *behind* single individual historical events. Today, however, we see India and China

[1] 'Man will become more clever and acute, but not better, happier, and stronger in action, or at least only in epochs. I foresee the time when God will have no more joy in them, but will break up everything for a new creation. But a long time will elapse first, and we may still for thousands and thousands of years amuse ourselves in all sorts of ways on this dear old surface.'

Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann. Oxenford's translation.

and Mexico with their dead cultures. What survived from the creations of the *Egyptians* into the classical period as a living spirit?

Were any of the endowments of Greece and Rome effective at the time of the Empire of Islam? . . . It is a mistake to think that the Church retained the least trace of classical being *as such*. It is an extraordinary chance that a culture should exist on the soil of western Europe, completely independent, possessing for its deepest spiritual needs a power over Time in the form of wisdom in relation to the past. If it had not been for this accident, what would have become of 'the progressing culture of mankind'? Really it is a precedent condition for this. I believe, in fact, that I have demonstrated that there has *never* been a real reawakening of the content of a strange culture in our development. It has always been a matter of a mask, a mould, to describe it accurately. What, since Hegel, has strengthened this illusion, and made it a leading article in the creed of the nineteenth century, is the accumulation of learned information *about* these cultures through digs, the study of literature, works of art, religions, manners, in fact a *purely* intellectual grasp. This phenomenon, which is purely Faustian, and foreign to the existence of any other culture—for one can search in vain in Indian, Chinese, and Greek philosophy for this idea of the perfection of mankind in this dynamic form—will end with Western Man and his culture. This is the last and necessary result of our historical instinct, which shows itself today in a stage beyond Hegel.

In my opinion it is part of the meaning and being of an individual culture that *inside* it, and thus in the West since A.D. 1000, such a progressive development exists. But it is a different matter to trace this development backwards through an arbitrarily arranged line of cultures, and in the same way to attempt to extend it forwards in a presumptive straight line.

Relativity does not apply to a single culture, but it does apply to the phantom, deeply grounded in our souls, of a general culture. I believe, Professor, that in the end you will agree with me about this. At the same time I should be very grateful for a searching criticism to expose the indubitable mistakes and contradictions

in my book. After being chained to my profession as schoolmaster up to 1911, I eventually obtained my freedom to bury myself in complete loneliness in these ideas during a period of several years. I am not the product of any school of philosophy, rather these ideas have somehow condensed from mathematics, history, painting and literature into a metaphysical whole.

I am most conscious of the dangers of such independence from the criticisms of teachers and friends, and would therefore be grateful for every additional criticism. If it becomes possible for me to visit Göttingen in the course of the year, I would not neglect the opportunity for a discussion.

After what I have told you of my philosophical qualifications it is obvious that after conscientious self examination I cannot accept your kind suggestion that I should undertake a professorship. The technical knowledge required for an official position and the energy necessary to carry it out, as it should be, are denied to me. As, unfortunately, I have begun so late on my life's work—I was born at Blankenburg in the Harz in 1880—I am under an obligation to it to waste no time in order to complete what is now only a plan and a sketch, and that is a great deal. But I thank you heartily for your suggestion as a sign of your participation in my philosophical activities.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Munich, 3.2.19

I would have answered your letter before now if I had not been prevented, by very unpleasant trouble with my teeth in the cold weather, from making inquiries about the question (you raise). Nothing definite can be predicted about the position in the near future. Conditions in Brunswick might improve, for example, through military intervention by the majority Socialists, and here they might rapidly get worse. In Munich there is a kind of peace before the storm, as the Independents lost the election but do not intend to give up their hold on the Government (with a low Jewish journalist as President,[1] a journeyman locksmith as Minister of

[1] Kurt Eisner who till 1905 was editor of *Vorwärts*.

Commerce, and a peddler as leader of the Soldiers' Council) while there is danger from the rigidly Catholic peasantry armed with knives and scythes. Munich is filled with an army of unemployed and rabble, which are being worked upon by the Radicals. Access to the town or to Upper Bavaria is impossible, as barracks are already built owing to the housing shortage, and all occupiers of houses of any size are subject to civil billeting. The food also is very poor as the peasants now refuse to sell. The hatred against the north Germans is mostly theoretic and not directed against individuals, but when in a small spot the tension grows between the Catholic peasantry, led by the priest, and the Reds with their hand grenades—as happens every day now—strange Protestants naturally are not in a very pleasant situation. One should not underrate the religious factor. As a summer visitor one is a source of profit to the native, it does not matter; but as soon as you live among them, they feel their society endangered by heresy, and one has to endure hostility. That is particularly the case today when the priests regard the Lutheran heresy not without reason as the prelude to Spartacism.

Emigration to Austria is out of the question. In the first place one requires a permission, stating reasons, from the home authorities, secondly permission from the Austrian consulate, thirdly permission from local authorities in Austria, which today is unobtainable. This is partly because of the terrible famine in all the Alpine countries owing to enemy occupation, for instance, of the Tyrol, and finally on account of Catholicism, which is harsher there than in blackest Bavaria (in the Salzburg district children are often refused absolution if they have spoken to Protestants at school). I have got information from a friend who is a Württemberger, where there is no restriction on immigration to be feared, also the food supply is by far the best in Germany. The evangelical areas of the Swabian Alps with their orchards and vineyards are particularly to be recommended, also there is little fear of the revolutionary mob. On the other hand it is quite out of the question to buy a house or land or to lease it, as nobody will let go of capital of that sort. . . . I think that your plan is somewhat questionable. One can easily fall out of the frying pan into the

fire, and today there is not a spot in Germany where conditions cannot very soon resemble those in Brunswick. The newspapers often take things lightly; but even in 'quiet' areas Bolshevism is rampant. Here, for example, not a week passes without shots, processions with hand grenades which are openly carried round and so on. . . .

Spengler to Hans Klöres

Munich, 6.3.19

. . . I have now worked for seven years without relaxation under the most unfavourable outward conditions, and have brought one book to a conclusion, always in the hope of rest from this sort of existence. Now I cannot go on. I am always being asked whether the second volume is ready. Not a single line is in its final form. The idea is there but I cannot go on. What I have heard so far of the great success of the first volume is with a few exceptions quite uncomprehending and superficial; I had hoped to discover some sound people, who think like me, and up to now had lived undiscovered. I am more and more conscious that our intellectuality is wasted in feuilletonism. And for whom am I to write now? That my philosophy is 'final', I have known from the start, nothing more of that kind is to come, but could not one find oneself a member of a small society of fellow thinkers. What would rid me of my exhaustion is travel, anywhere, to pleasant surroundings. The obstacle is my wretched financial state. I have obtained a medical certificate for a recreational trip to Switzerland. But everything depends upon 1,000 francs credit which an enthusiastic reader of my book in Switzerland will obtain. . . .

As regards politics you are right: in spite of the desperate state of our poor country I see hope. Above everything the whole world is approaching a crisis. Subversion will not be able to stop at the German frontiers. The pent up feelings which for the last fifty years have been accumulating under the pressure of the standing armies, without the possibility of release, are driving forwards as a reaction to the great war. I see no misfortune in the increasing radicalization of Germany. We *must* go through it, and

perhaps we alone shall arrive at anything satisfactory. Three-quarters of the people who vote today for Scheidemann and Naumann are basically Monarchists and lovers of order. Spartacism—an excellent title for this phenomenon—is something for Russians, Frenchmen, Italians, certainly not for Prussians. If it appears in Rome or Paris we can experience orgies compared to which those of 1792 and of the Commune in 1871 will be as nothing. It indicates the depths of depression of our souls that such a thing should appear among us. People forget that in November not only the State and the army, but Bebel's (socialist) party organization collapsed. Here a revival must take place. True socialism is a Prussian tutelary genius. Already before the war I said in my book that Frederick William I was the first socialist.... Is not Noske today already a real Prussian militarist? Will the gigantic Russian complex, with which the Entente does not have to cope, yet again come under our influence? These are things about which one dare not speak today, but in a couple of years' time, German energy will revive and bring with it a new view of the situation and aims.

Then I hope also to join in the task. In the meantime we must remain silent in the interest of our ideas. But do not lose sight of your mission. You could become a publicist of great influence, and that is the way to accomplish something outside parties. The period of political parties in the style of the nineteenth century is at an end. In the future it will not be a matter of Liberals, Conservatives, and Socialists, for the boundaries between these concepts are disappearing, but of practical tasks and determined leaders. I have called it the step from Parliaments to Caesars.

The black-red-yellow Weimar comedy is the farewell benefit performance of the first named.

One of the most peculiar incidents in the story is the Eisner affair. I was a personal witness of some of it. It was brought about by the mental inferiority of the Bavarian, who good naturedly accepts whatever any clique talks or writes him into. Whether it is a priest or a party journalist makes no difference. Nowhere in Europe, I believe, is the level of political intelligence so low. Eisner himself was the author of the conspiracy, he saw

that he was finished as regards the Landtag. He had obtained a firm grip on the workmen and soldiers, and arranged a demonstratory procession on the previous Sunday when all the points of his programme were displayed on banners. The murder of Auer was an extra privately added by a Radical group. Two days before, this party put on a ostensibly Royalist 'Putsch' to create opposition to 'Reaction', and to bring influence to bear on the Majority Socialists.

On the famous Friday everything was arranged up to the last detail: the Landtag was to be blown up, all newspaper offices, barracks, and public buildings were to be occupied, and officers to be disarmed in their quarters. Everything went off quickly and in an admirable manner: it had taken a day of careful preparation. Then at the decisive moment it occurred to a student to shoot Eisner. There is no question of a conspiracy, but the Spartacists took over the leadership in the place of the dead man, and with the watch-word 'Eisner and Auer murdered by reactionaries' naturally did not meet with the slightest resistance.

I happened to be close by and heard the shots which hit Eisner. To escape from the tumult I went from the Promenadeplatz to the Stachus (hotel). Here they had not yet heard of the murder, but knew of the gatherings in the Theresienwiese, which had therefore been *precedent*. The state of affairs in the following days beggars all description. Workmen, soldiers, police, security troops mistrusted one another, opened fire like madmen, and certainly killed 100–200 people. In my barrack quarter every night was illuminated with Verey lights, and the heroes in their panic let their machine guns rattle if a cat crept over the road. With *one* battalion one could occupy Munich in two hours, that is all that would be required. Unfortunately now that vagabond Eisner has become a martyr—like Marat formerly—and that is the most unforgivable part of the affair.

NOTE: On 21.2.19 Kurt Eisner was assassinated by two revolver shots fired by a student, Graf Arco, as he went to open the 'Landtag'. At the opening of the Landtag the Bavarian Minister was also shot. The Socialists proclaimed a general strike, the newspapers were taken over partly by the Communists, partly by the miiltary. Workmen were armed, a state of siege declared; a number of citizens were arrested as hostages. A central council of the Bavarian Republic was formed.

[1919]

Spengler to Hans Klöres

Munich, 26.3.19

. . . In the meantime I have received a couple of good pieces of news, which enable me to breathe a little; at least I seem to be relieved from the sordid cares for the morrow, and I will tell you, dear friend, before anyone else, what gives me new courage for my tasks. Therefore please do not take any more steps on my behalf; I am eternally grateful to you for your efforts, and I would accept from the State of Hamburg an award, to which no embarrassment of any sort is attached, as I know I have earned it, but I cannot accept support from private sources. Next my journey to Switzerland is assured and I am allowed four weeks. Then the measures I adopted against the publishing firm of Braumüller have achieved a surprising success. It is ready to grant a retarded honorarium—on condition that I surrender the work to them for ever. In the meantime a large publishing firm in Munich has declared its willingness to pay me the same sum, in order to obtain possession of the book. Also I have signed a contract with Beck-Munich for a short pamphlet 'Prussianism and Socialism'. You know something of the contents as the result of our conversations in Munich. Now is the moment to bring forward those decisive assertions regarding the meaning and direction of Socialism and its relation to the present time. To free Socialism from Marx[1]—for it is older and more profound than him—to lead it away from mob instincts, from mere negation and criticism of the historically finished, from the amateurism of these days to a foreordained Prussian goal. The best brains of today are ready for this. If my nerves do not play me a trick I hope to finish my MSS. soon, and then to travel to Switzerland. I frequently hear cheerful news about my first volume. It has afforded relief to many

[1] Spengler considered Marx as past history because Marx based his theory of class warfare on a nineteenth-century British idea of Individualism—'the free private individual, who, an enemy of the State, and opposed to organization, demands an unrestricted struggle for existence, because in that alone can he bring into effect his best, his old Viking instincts. When Buckle, Malthus, and Darwin saw the basis of society in the struggle for existence, they were right for their country and people.' *Preussentum und Socialismus*, Chap. 12, Englaender und Preussen.—Tr.

returned from the front. What I am striving after, mental discipline, thoroughness, depth, a political view based on an understanding of our time; this is generally understood and being followed. All the more trivial is the babble of many reviews, letters, and insistent visitors. In the summer I would like to escape to some lonely place, to make a fair copy of the second volume. Then we will spend our holidays together, and I will also visit Hamburg. Now forgive this materialistic letter. I hope that things will so develop for me that I shall not need to consider these troublesome matters. I say nothing about politics, only I am watching with quiet pleasure how the Entente is giving lessons to the Germans in retaliation. Napoleon, too, experienced that once, and we, with our nature *need* these catastrophes on the way to our goal.

Spengler to Hans Klöres

4.5.19

At last we are out of the hell of these four weeks.[1] The last few days were bad—on May 2nd Agnesstrasse was under gunfire for hours; the Pioneer barracks, a strongpoint of the Reds, is 200 metres from my flat. For weeks I have received nothing, no letters, no newspapers, foreign newspapers prohibited under pain of death. Nothing but hunger, looting, filth, danger, and rascality without parallel. Write to me soon.

Spengler to August Albers

Munich, 25.6.19

Many thanks for your letter. I am answering at once, although today I have had one of my worst days. I can master myself, outwardly, quite well, but this Peace Treaty[2] depresses me dread-

[1] On 29.4 the Government troops attacked Munich. Unconditional surrender was demanded. Thereupon the citizen hostages were murdered by the revolutionaries. This aroused the civil population, who formed a citizen army. The Soviet Republic shortly came to an end.

[2] The German representatives received the terms of the Treaty of Versailles on 7.5.19, and the covering note on 16.6.19. The Scheidemann cabinet resigned on 20.6.19.

fully, although I know that we shall follow the Tilsit-Leipzig[1] path once more, and that the three lunatics in Versailles have only dictated a pause in the world war. The sinking of the fleet is at last one more act of national pride. I shall leave on Wednesday July 2nd, as the express to Lindau leaves only twice a week, and I cannot collect the money in Rorschach on Saturday afternoon. I wish I were there! A couple of weeks in peaceful surroundings! I cannot work here any longer.

You will not find much that is judicious among the reviews except a comment by Simmel, that it [*The Decline of the West*] is the most important philosophy of history since Hegel.

Under the title Expressionism not two, but a number of forms of expression run together. This is the catchword for all the marasmus of the period—the amateurism of superfluous and highly intelligent people, the wish to succeed without the ability to do so, the search for something, though one does not know what it is, the need for the fundamentally silly (satisfied in America by negro dances), honest pedantry, which gets hold of an idea and then unswervingly carries it out, the senile taste of great western cities and eastern barbarians, poisoned by a foreign culture, and many other things lumped together.

Spengler to Hans Klöres

Munich, 1.8.19

Again in Munich after a month of complete untroubled recreation. I have seen, heard, read nothing unwholesome, and spent my time entirely in a magnificent routine, eaten, drunk, rowed, walked, delighted in handsome streets, pretty clothes, good exercise. Now I feel hungry for hard work. The weeks in Switzerland will be to the advantage of the second volume. . . . The food is nearly normal but twice or three times as expensive as in 1914. . . . The retail prices are so high that it does not pay to bring anything into Germany; relatively it is now cheaper here. The revolutionary tension in a country where pay rates have hardly

[1] After crushing defeats by Napoleon, Prussia had to sign the Treaty of Tilsit, and she did not recover till late in the Napoleonic wars at the battle of Leipzig.

risen is an explanation. One only has to spend a day in Zurich to discover the reason: this is the centre of profiteering in Europe, from which mostly the people of Seldwyla[1] themselves, or else the newly arrived hordes of Polish Jews, negotiate the goods which they keep moving between Milan, Warsaw, Vienna, Brussels, Paris, and Munich until they have obtained a magnified price. This is the chief subject of interest. World politics come into consideration only in so far as they disturb or encourage business. The peace treaty of Versailles is judged exclusively from this standpoint—I am referring to conversations in the streets and the café, for I have not read the newspapers.

As a German one is always treated politely, rather, however, as if the peace terms did not affect the individual German privately. I could not live, far less work, among people with this restricted scope of ideas. But for a month as a cure, Switzerland is the best obtainable.

Spengler to Guggenheim Zollikofer

Munich, 2.8.19

I can now send you the first greeting from my writing table and report that I felt a slight twinge of home-sickness between Rorschach and Lindau. The first contact with northern reality was when I could not make the lamp or the gas fire work in my apartment at midnight, and finally looked by candlelight at my beautiful packet of tea which I could not use. The gas establishment intend to stop working owing to lack of coal. I completed the journey—unfortunately—without hindrance. The customs examination in Rorschach was confined to a glance in an opened box, perhaps because they confused me with President Wilson. Only the wine bottles were examined expertly against the light, shaken, and recognized as Swiss local wines. On the other hand I can tell Gusti that the ladies, even the quite young ones, were treated with all the attention which is owing to their sex.

The look of the streets in Munich has quite changed. The show

[1] *Die Leute von Seldwyla* is a well-known story about Switzerland by the Swiss writer Gottfried Keller.

windows are filled with the most beautiful things, and people wander from one to the other and marvel like children on Christmas Eve. When one comes from abroad, one soon observes that the refuse of the whole of Europe has been pushed in here to be sold, before the public realizes that all these goods have been examined, tasted, and smelt before elsewhere. There are mountains of chocolate, but either in broken pieces or in blotting paper packages without the firm's name; there is not a single original packing of a Swiss firm, only 'genuine, sweet Swiss chocolate', etc., spotted and dusty cigars in cardboard boxes, muddy olive oil, rice which has turned yellow, wines with fancy names, and American hams which already smell bad, probably remnants from the Front. Many things are cheaper than in Switzerland, but necessary foodstuffs—meat, milk, eggs, fats, are short as before. At present there is no fuss because the grown-up children fear that the whole fairy story picture will disappear if they don't behave nicely. In a fortnight or so they will notice what a swindle these sort of imports are, and demand better goods for less money, and by that time the supplies of rubbish will be exhausted and the prices will be appropriate to genuine goods. Cigarettes, tea, shoes, and clothing are still in very short supply.

Herr Albers also sends greetings, he has warned me that I must be very diligent, as he has already bought 5,000 kilos of paper for the second volume. Now for a terrific effort in order to earn another holiday as a reward. Best remembrances to Gusti with her dadaistic diary.

Spengler to Hans Klöres

Munich, 7.8.19

. . . . Yes, I am on my feet again. I can eat, sleep, and write, as in the good old time. I had no ordinary desire to accept your kind offer by immediate action. For it is now a very serious problem for me where I am to live. My miserable damp-cold, almost unheatable apartment, in which, driven by necessity, I have spent six years, has become unbearable to me. How can I work there when as a single person I am not entitled to any coal. Also, a few months

ago I inherited from my aunt some beautiful mahogany furniture which has turned my tiny uncarpeted chamber into a lumber room.

In Munich the rascally law from the time of the Soviet is still in force, under which I only have a right to two rooms, with no right to choose, but according to the list of the Housing Department. Either I shall succeed somehow or other by cunning in obtaining a reasonable apartment, or at the end of autumn I will pack up my books and MSS. and flee to the north. Then, if I can stand the climate at all, I will live in Hamburg for a time, and we will have some good months together. As regards provisions I hope I shall be able partly to look after you as well as myself, for at the moment there is a fair amount obtainable, and I will bring a supply with me.... It is not difficult to get fat and smoked meat. I am disgusted with Munich. Since the revolution it is dirtier than a Polish village, not only the streets but the inhabitants, who have scraped off the Reichsdeutsch varnish and gladly given full play to a Bavarian indifference towards careful dress, a proper demeanour, and clean linen. The better-to-do families, in particular the Court and the nobility, also those immigrant from elsewhere, have gone off in droves. All the more aristocratic houses are let to real or fictitious firms, and thus the last trace of elegance and taste has disappeared from the street picture. And one has just come from Zurich to this stinking quagmire.

My previous publisher has not got the second edition ready while Beck is already expecting a third and fourth. According to the existing orders a fifth and sixth will be required in the autumn.

You see that my financial circumstances have changed overnight; the pressure of recent years has come to an end.

Paul Lensch to Spengler

28.8.19

Today, 170th anniversary of Goethe's birth, I should like to take the opportunity of thanking you for your wonderful book, which gripped me more and more, the more deeply I studied it.

A few days ago I wrote a review of the book in the *Deutsche Allgemeime Zeitung*, which I presume you will have received.

This winter I gave two lectures on the subject of your ideas and the effect was extraordinarily deep. The public sat as if they were turned into stone, a discussion was not desired, and the chairman said that that evening they had all received new eyes. Certainly the professionals from the universities are against it, and the majority of the ideas are so new that one must always emphasize that a new theory is involved which the learned must thoroughly investigate. . . . I had all sorts of questions, also concerning details, at the same time I think that you must have received numerous letters expressing pleased astonishment and admiration. How are you personally? Have you recovered psychically from the collapse? And how are you off for food? I am normally a cold man, but you have warmed my heart. Have you connections with the universities or have you any inclination or prospects of a professional chair at Munich? This letter is only an expression of opinion. Another time I will write more.

In genuine admiration,

Yours,

Paul Lensch

Adolf von Harnack[1] *to Spengler*

Grunewald–Berlin, 30.10.19

I much regret that I cannot fulfil your kind wish. I did not put down the lecture in writing, only an outline and a few notes. I have read your book twice, the first time in parts, then carefully in Berchtesgaden, reading nothing else for three weeks, and I am grateful to you for the great inspiration and enrichment I have obtained from it. My criticism is seldom directed against the 'transverse section' in your picture [the comparison of the different stages in ancient and modern cultures—Tr], even if I cannot follow everything in detail, and much of it seems to be forced. I have learnt a very great deal; but your 'longitudinal' section, as well as

[1] Adolf von Harnack was a professor of Church History and a great authority on the first three centuries. Many articles in earlier editions of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* are written by him.

the determining of the beginning and the end of individual cultures, have aroused in me a very lively opposition, which consequently must also extend to the parallelism. I find so much to be unproven, dogmatic, arbitrary, that the structure of your work appears to be dubious.

Again the one-sided judgment[1] of the cultures as finished grandeurs seems to be mistaken in view of the chain-link connections between them; it is possible that the linked sections obtain new values. This is connected with the great question as to whether you have not been in too much of a hurry to reject the idea that during the period of change in the various cultures the development of one, even if it is only in its general traits, is carried through to the new culture under formation—and on this depends the answer to the last question, whether 'objectivity', 'truth', 'values' are only dreams, or whether the development of our cultures does not, by freeing us from delusions, bring us nearer to that unattainable goal, the mere thought of which is a considerable achievement.

[1] Most critics, *vide* Professor Schroeter's *Metaphysik des Untergangs*, support Harnack's criticism of Spengler's separation of 'cultures' into watertight departments, and to his schematic parallelisms between cultures. It must be admitted that S's insistence on the discontinuity of cultures gives him great opportunities for poetry and drama. 'I see in place of the empty figment of our linear history, the drama of a number of mighty cultures. Here the cultures, peoples, languages, truths, gods, landscapes, bloom and age like the oaks and the pines, the blossoms, twigs, and leaves—but there is no ageing mankind. Each culture has its new possibilities of self expression, which arise, ripen, decay, and never return.' S. found a plausible instance of a culture which died, never to return, in the Greek art of the Nude Statue—'This statue art, the art of the naked body, existed only in the classical period' (with Canova and Thorwaldsen in mind, it might be possible to agree). S. is equally dogmatic about other arts—'Oil painting faded out at the end of the seventeenth century. Rembrandt's mighty landscapes lie essentially in the Universe, Manet's in the neighbourhood of a railway station. With the eighteenth century, too, architecture died at last, submerged and choked in the music of rococo.'

S's dogmatism becomes evident when he indulges in prophecies, based on historic parallels. Schroeter quotes Bergson: 'The road of a man's life is strewn with all the broken pieces and fragments of possibilities begun upon, but not carried out, but still within his scope.' This applies also to a culture. The past is no real guide, for the conditions and possibilities are always new.

'Spengler gives us an inward picture of the world. It is something he has created. The busy critics should remember this.'—Tr.

As to the prophecies which you make, there is, about them, a dubious element, because the strength and the scope of the retarding powers cannot be foreseen. Even if I permit the metaphor to stand, that we are, as it were, like men striding towards the east on an ice floe which is being driven west, I must add that one of them might hit on the saving notion of making a mast and sails from a stick and cloths to give the ice floe a different course. But I must not go on any longer. There has always been a doubting Thomas like me among disciples, and in this sense I am a disciple of your book. But you yourself, dear Herr Doktor, in the continuation of your deep studies, will apply as much exact meaning, as you would in mathematics, and will permit revisions in what you assert, and what you deny, for, in respect of both, your assertion seem to be more definite than the degree of our knowledge permits.

The Nietzsche Archives to Spengler

Weimar, November 1919

Your honour is respectfully informed that by order of the Nietzsche archives founded by Herr Consul Christian Lassen of Hamburg, a prize has been awarded for the year 1919 to the following authors:

Privy Councillor, University Professor Dr Vaihinger for the work *The Philosopher of the As if.*
Herr Oswald Spengler for the work *The Decline of the West.*
Count Hermann Kayserling for the work *The Travel Diary of a Philosopher.*

It gives me particular pleasure to be able to inform you of this. An artistic diploma in respect of this distinction will be forwarded to you later. I should be glad if you would inform the Nietzsche Archives in due course, to what address the sum of 1,500 marks should be sent or remitted.

Dr Oehler,
Overburgermaster,
Chairman of the Nietzsche Archives Foundation at Weimar

[1919]

Spengler to Hans Klöres

Munich, 27.11.19

I must write you at least a few lines today, as in the middle of December I am going to my sister at Blankenburg, and after New Year via Berlin to you, so that we can have a couple of days' talk. We need it, don't you agree? I have just finished my political pamphlet, under the most frightful nervous pressure, as each sheet went off straight to the printer.

I am not born to be a journalist and thus in four weeks I have written a fair copy of 500 sheets in folio and then struck them out in order to produce 100 printed sheets in readable German. Now once more I have learnt how I have got to work, and never again will I undertake anything which has got to be finished by a fixed date. Also last Sunday I gave a lecture to the Goethe Society and there also I came to the conclusion never again to waste my time and labour on such stale affairs as lectures to Culture Philistines.

Prussia and Socialism[1] appears next week, also the first bound

[1] This pamphlet—*Prussianism and Socialism*—is chiefly a defence of Spengler's political ideal, the oligarchic government of Imperial Germany. 'Prussianism', he says, does not represent the nation at large; there are the idealistic professors and the romantic enthusiasts, a remnant of torpid Gothic, memories of 1848 revived by British ideas of friendship between the nations and humanitarianism, ideas held by eternal provincials, 'Biedermaenner of the "Biertiche" and Parliament . . . a sleepy tendency to British Liberalism, with its enmity against the State, without the tense initiative of the individual Englishman'. Spengler postulates two opposing moral imperatives; the British are under the influence of the 'Viking Spirit', while the 'Prussians are guided by the spirit of the Knightly Orders. Today these two principles are called Individualism and Socialism. Virtues of the highest order stand behind these words. In one case, self-reliance, self-determination, fixedness of purpose, initiative; in the other, loyalty, discipline, self-denial, self-training. The British lived on an island, the Prussians guarded a March, threatened on all sides. The British formed their own State, while Prussia was a creation of the Hohenzollerns. Prussia and Britain represent, respectively, the maximum and the minimum of the idea of the Socialist State. The British State, according to Liberal ideas should be as unobtrusive as possible. On the other hand Britain has "Society", which takes the place of the State. The private individual is the complementary idea to Society. Cecil Rhodes was a private individual who annexed countries. England has arrived at a uniform standard of feeling and behaviour which has been attained by no other country of Western Europe. This standard of behaviour has set the tone for modern civilization. Prussia has cultivated an equally profound consciousness of rank. The Prussians are fond of titles and of wearing uniforms, but the uniform is the "King's coat",

copies of *The Decline of the West*. Both will be sent to you at the same time.

Spengler to Oscar Beck

Blankenburg, 23.12.19

The introduction to *Ernst Droem, Songs* will reach you from Dresden through Herr Weigel.

I am sending you today the proposed agreement with a request to alter the form. Paragraph 6 is added to enable the poems to be withdrawn in case of failure, and I undertake to re-purchase them myself, because I am the one who is trying to collect a circle of admirers for these poems. Section 5, however, is the most important in the new draft. It is my wish to create for the author the possibility, during the few years in which he can be lyrically productive, of devoting himself entirely to his poetic activities. He requires, therefore, not only a modest honorarium, but the hope, also, expressed in the agreement, of, in a short time, being able to live on the proceeds from his works, at least without taking up an employment which would occupy the whole of his time. But apart from that I look upon them (the poems) as being in a way a part of my own works. Should therefore a honorarium of 20 per cent appear to the firm not to be very advantageous to them, which I do not believe, so this could be balanced against the profits obtained from my own works.

NOTE: Adolf Weigel (Ernst Droem), the author of the poems, was the son of a lady with whom Spengler lodged when he first came to Munich.

Spengler to Hans Klöres

Blankenburg, 23.12.19

. . . Now as to your book. Judging from the list of the contents, I think you had better send the MSS. to the firm of Reimar

a symbol of service. In England nobody who belongs to "Society" will appear in civilian dress, that is to say in clothes which do not conform with custom and fashion. From the dress of the English gentleman, which only an Englishman can wear successfully, is derived the frock coat of the German provincial "Biedermann", under which his heart beats steadfastly for freedom and the Dignity of Man, the ideals of 1848.'—Tr.

Hobbing, Berlin. You need a striking title. Tell me when you are sending it, and I will write to the firm. It is fairly far Right! Refer to me in your letter, and say that I consider what you have written to be important and informative at the present time—I think that then the firm will sort out your work from the rest of the intake, and examine it seriously. My little essay seems to have penetrated quickly. Now I am going to bed; I spent last night in the waiting room at Halle, guarding my luggage and I am tired. Send me news soon, also as to the title and extent of your book. And don't be annoyed with me because I am postponing a little my journey to Hamburg. I am going very soon to Munich, and will either install myself in a very fine apartment (more than improbable) or move to Dresden.

1920

Spengler to Hedwig Hintze

Munich, 3.2.20

Allow me to thank you for the most careful and penetrating review that I have read so far of my *The Decline of the West*.

I know very well how many failures and mistakes are attached to attempts of this kind. Now I should like to remove your objection to admiring Wagner's Nibelung writings. Wagner deliberately adopted social political points of view. This did not escape the notice of Nietzsche (*The Case of Wagner*) or Shaw (*Wagner breviary*).

Hans Vaihinger to Spengler

Halle, 2.3.20

. . . It is of great value to me that from a preliminary knowledge of the general contents of the *Philosophy of As if* you have obtained the impression that its views might be of interest to you. . . .

The easiest introduction to the *Philosophy of As if* is perhaps the final chapter about Nietzsche in which I have summarized the relevant teachings of Nietzsche but I must expressly observe that my own ideas and writings were quite independent of Nietzsche: as you see from the preface and introduction, my book appeared in 1876, which shows that similar ideas occurred at the same time in various heads.

Whether the review of your work in *Annals of Philosophy* comes up to your expectations I do not know. Every editor of a magazine is, as I know from having been years editor of *Studies of Kant*, very dependent on his colleagues, and reviewers in particular often produce something quite different from what one desires.

H. Vogt to Spengler

Wiesbaden, 21.4.20

Thank you very much for your kind letter which gave me much pleasure. It was no small gratification to me to see my views on Prussianism reaffirmed. Enough of that and to something more important. To my great grief I observe that you are a patient. Anginas of long standing are no small matter and bring people down very much. I will make you a proposal. Come here as soon as you are capable of travelling. You will recover more quickly here. I will place at your disposal my private clinic (for internal diseases), the 'Sanatorium Nerotal', and my personal services. I invite you to be my guest in every way. I beg you not to consider me intrusive. In a large concern like ours one extra patient does not involve special work or trouble. You can therefore say 'Yes' without hesitation. As far as I am concerned this sincerely meant proposal is only a modest expression of the very great deal that your book has done for me. I should be very glad if you came.

Spengler to Alfred von Tirpitz

Munich, 6.5.20

I am putting before your Excellency a circumstance affecting the honour of Germany, and above all of your creation the German Navy, with the request that you will take the necessary steps, or inform me to whom I should make my application. The flag of the armoured cruiser *Scharnhorst* is in the safe of a Munich bank. It was in a case together with the corpse of a German sailor washed up on the South American coast. It is perhaps the only relic of the squadron, which went to the bottom with Count Spee. According to the information I have been given, the anti-German captain of a coasting steamer hid it and sold it. By chance it came into the possession of a German living in Rio, who in spite of personal risk—for an attempt was made to secure it as a trophy for an English club—was able to send it to Germany. . . . It is actually the property of anti-German parties in Rio who demand 1,500 dollars for it. If this amount is not paid the

flag which has secretly been brought over here must go back not only to adorn an English home, but also to serve as evidence that no one in Germany has any idea of the disgrace attaching to such a proceeding. . . . I attach a letter addressed to the German Museum. In my opinion it only remains to organize a confidential collection and therefore I approach your Excellency. If this is possible I beg you to accept from me 200 marks as the first subscription.

With expressions of the deepest respect I remain,

Yours truly,

Oswald Spengler

(author of *Prussianism and Socialism*)

Alfred von Tirpitz to Spengler

St Blasien, 11.5.20

. . . In accordance with your letter I will inquire of the Admiralty in Berlin whether they are inclined to take a hand in the matter. It is undoubtedly a question of one of the reserve flags, for the *Scharnhorst* itself went down with its flag flying. The price £300 is certainly very considerable, according to the present exchange 60,000–70,000 marks. The flag as such is not publicly recognizable as the *Scharnhorst* flag, and as the English are unfortunately in the position of being able to obtain any number of similar flags in Danzig, I am frankly doubtful whether the material cost is in proportion to the ideal value. I will permit myself to return to the matter when I am in receipt of a reply from the Admiralty.

I gladly use the opportunity to tell you of the great interest with which I have read your writings, namely *Prussianism and Socialism* which you sent me. I only wish that your ideas could find response in the Marxist-infected working classes.

Spengler to Helene Langewiesche

Munich, 7.5.20

I am moving this month to a rather larger flat facing south which has just become vacant in the same house. The Benedikten

Wand[1] will thus unfortunately have to wait while I am undertaking a climb of two floors.

Spengler to Hans Klöres

Munich, 20.5.20

Forgive my long silence. I am changing quarters tomorrow to an apartment somewhat more worthy of a human being in the same house—to obtain this I have had to protect myself daily for six weeks against the corruption in the housing office, where the officials, each for himself, let a dwelling several times over to the highest bidder. The 21–30 thousandth of my *Prussianism and Socialism* are appearing at the moment—this may well be a record. Moreover it has a strong effect on the younger politicians and industrials; it is through them alone that a reconstruction can take place, which will bring about a tactical alliance between the respectable working classes and the nationalistic Right, directed against the money market and the mob. What we most need are workers' leaders, not the official leaders, but coming (let us say) from the Independent Socialist party, who do not attack Radicalism from the outside, which only strengthens it, but gradually obtain the leadership from the inside.

I know that very many elements of the Right desire an alliance with the workers. But with their present Jewish organization which is not directed against the money market but the squirearchy, an alliance with the Left is not possible. Marxism with its catch phrases like Proletariat, Class War, etc., must first fall. . . . In return for the letters I send you a photo which is a very fair likeness. I have not yet been able to make up my mind to go to a good photographer to sit for 'the public', although I am always being bothered to do so. The people should rather read my writings a little more carefully, it is astounding how the reviewers drivel about them. Excuse this muddled letter, I am sitting with a severe headache between boxes and cases and have to do all my own packing.

[1] The Benedikten Wand is a mountain, 5,910 feet, near Kochel.

Helene Langewiesche to Spengler

Ebenhausen, 27.5.20

Will you be angry if I approach you again about the Benedikten Wand? In the middle of July I must go with the children for several weeks to the sea and so the time for walking tours is very limited. But I *must*, *must* go into the mountains. They are so close and much too tempting every day before one's eyes. Won't you and can't you come with me. If you came to us a day or two earlier we could more easily settle questions about route, provisions and the state of the barometer. Of course anyone you like to bring with you will be all right. *I* have no one who can accompany me to the Benedikten Wand. I should have to bury my wish and find tamer mountains, where I could certainly easily find a companion.

Spengler to Hans Klöres

21.6.20

I have read your book once more. . . . The question of the future of Russia, which surely is no longer directed towards the S.W. but towards the S.E., becomes therefore today, and still more tomorrow, a political factor of the first importance. . . . England certainly has a land front, the line Cairo to Karachi, and a revolutionary Russia is a greater threat to it than western-monarchical Russia. Finally the sudden appeal for everlasting peace, at the end, so to speak upsets the logic of the beginning, for Versailles is not to be got over by conciliation either psychical or commercial. You have pointed out the antagonism of the great peoples, from which it follows that they cannot agree to live side by side with one another, unless one of them no longer dares nor wishes to put up a resistance. . . . We are far off from that state. The breathing space in the world war, in which we are living will come to a natural end. That must not be set down in print, and for that reason books like yours, in which the heart of the matter is not mentioned, but still felt, are difficult to write.

The election results were in accordance with my wishes as

with yours. Let us quietly wade further into the swamp. So long as the Entente stands on its legs, this is the sort of government we need. . . .

H. Lufft to Spengler

Passaic, N.Y., 24.6.20

I found your book *The Decline of the West* in the New York library, and have been able to devote two morning hours to it. Allow me to express my pleasure that I have thus made the acquaintance of an important work and of an interesting personality.

After such short study naturally I cannot say much, but together with many points of agreement I should like to be allowed to make a few critical observations, and to put some questions to you; whether you do not overrate the parallelism between human development and the seasons of the year (the parallelism does not allow for the influence of the sun in the latter case, and the sun seems to me very important), also whether the evolution of the Middle Ages does not display a complete cycle of seasons (Thomas Aquinas represents autumnal purity and clarity of thought, if anybody in the world does)—whether you do not undervalue Roman individualism (political nations always have a great interest in and therefore also a talent for the individual psyche, and the Roman portrait busts, those, for instance, which we have in N.Y. far excel anything that the Greeks have dreamt of in this connection)—whether the distinction between logical and analogical thought and conclusion is permissible, the former is not to be regarded only as a special case of general analogical thought 'under laboratory conditions' (for pedagogic reasons I should like this in particular not to be overlooked).

I do not expect that you will reply at length to these suggestions —your time is too valuable for that, they are only meant for suggestions. The actual purpose of this letter is to inquire whether you have sufficient to eat. I beg you to answer this question, in this case quite without false shame. I myself am not very well off, but you need not worry yourself, as I have enough always to

help you directly if you are in want, and I could certainly interest some other gentlemen, who are rather better off.

Josef Minn to Spengler

Bottrop, Westfalen, 25.8.20

Very honoured Herr Professor! You have upset millions of bookworms. Painful for a doctor to have to diagnose the *facies hippocratica*. Unfortunately many intoxicated ones have not yet noticed that you have smashed all the alarm clocks with the sterilized *deiculi* of several thousand years. God or Nature or Life (whatever one likes to call it) cannot be appealed to any more. You have deposited your culture organisms in flowerpots separated from one another and made them come into existence by spontaneous generation from the mother soil. There are gaps which perhaps will be filled in the second volume. When is it coming out? The Rembrandt-German is your father. You must certainly write about Jesus and the alarm apparatus which is called the Church. Copernican revolutionary. What a book! I have bought your book from my savings, but it was an experience, I am only a simple man but I am fond of reading 'inspired' books. But that one should pick paradise apples from a mathematical oak. These are signs and wonders.

H. Vogt to Spengler

Wiesbaden, 27.10.20

I have just finished studying your impressive book and together with my expression of admiration, I hope you will allow me to make some observations. . . . It is easily understood that the thought of the whither of our historical life is actively aroused by your epochal work. For years I have vaguely felt from impressions from Russian literature and history, and from my travels in Russia, that the coming epoch will be a Slav epoch. At the same time in which in the 'corrupt west' Nietzsche, Strindberg, Ibsen, and Shaw, as haters or would-be reconstructors were preaching of a collapsing world, there appeared Dostoievski in a key of eastern prophecy, for the most part completely misunderstood by us; he

is the herald of an arising people, a coming time. A light will arise in the East—the Slav people, blessed by God, will be the bearer of the future.

I need not say that I do *not* think of the Russian-Slav epoch as coming in the shape of Bolshevism: that is a transitional stadium released by quite another form of development. I have always had trouble in separating out clearly the original Russian element. In literature, also in art, as in religion (here perhaps least) it is hidden behind two factors: firstly the influence of the West, to which gifted writers and musicians—Turgeniev, for example, and Tschaikowski—quite succumbed. Dostoievski's time as a political prisoner 1846–57 is so far of importance to World History as it permitted him to become autochthonous. Secondly, the real Russian soul is concealed by political tendentiousness—art was a speaking trumpet for politics.

Do you think that this invasion by western culture is comparable to the part played by Mycenae for Athens, or better still what Neo-Platonism, Christianity and Islam meant for German chivalry of the Middle Ages? . . . Secondly I would thank you for your picture of Buddhism. I think I have read enough to be familiar with it. In my opinion also it is only to be understood as the religion of a tired, dying world, which instinctively desires Nirvana. In a narrow circle I have often expressed this view. But I have a third request. The history of medicine, classical, arabic, western, would, I think, illustrate sharply your attitude towards these three cultures. I mean by that the spirit of medicine which cannot be separated from philosophy, the study of the suffering rather than of the sick—and to a lesser extent I have in mind the unethical overestimation of the technical in the post-Darwinian period.

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Munich, 19.11.20

When you were kind enough to receive me this summer you told me that I was permitted to make some proposals for the Nietzsche prize. Since then I have been very much impressed with a work by

Chr. Fr. Weiser *Shaftesbury and German Intellectual life* (Teubner). It is the most important work for many years dealing with the history of the development of the German view of the world, but unfortunately there is the truly German danger that it may remain in the background because the author has no connections with the universities. I have made inquiries and have discovered that Weiser lived for many years in America, but returned to Germany shortly before the war disgusted with the American attitude towards life. . . .

Spengler to Hans Klöres

Munich, 24.11.20

Your letter has somewhat reassured me as regards yourself. You have passed the crisis and are thinking of yourself and of life which still has demands on you. . . .

For your Renaissance studies I would mention a couple of small new books: *The World of the Middle Ages* and Coluccio Salutati's view of life, *Alfred v Martin*; Machiavelli's interpretation of history and his idea virtù, E. W. Mayer.

. . . to change the subject I have been suffering for one and a half months from an abnormally severe Angina (infectious inflammation of the tonsils), which usually is over in two to three weeks, but with me showed no signs of a final cure. I have two doctors, get the most severe paintings with silver nitrate; I don't stay in bed, but cannot take walks. But the irritation of the nerves in the head and the painful taking of nourishment through a cavity wounded all round get me down terribly.

Spengler to Manfred Schroter

Munich, 2.12.20

Dr Herr Doctor,

I have not been able to visit you for a long time, as I have been suffering for almost two months from a severe Angina, which now appears as an epidemic in a dangerous form. Because of the danger of infection I could not go out for Christmas, although my treatment was over.

1921

Frau von Wedel to Spengler

Heidelberg, 3.2.21

Your work *The Decline of the West* gave me much pleasure some time ago when I read and studied it, and I meant to write you a word of thanks. I omitted to do so in order not to bother you. In the meantime edition after edition has appeared. It has become the 'fashion' among the educated, and finally all the learned have had to read it. Now they are very hostile, everywhere one reads criticisms and hears lectures on the subject. I should only like to tell you: at the beginning of term in this university—no doubt too in all the others—there has scarcely been a lecture course in which the lecturer at the start did not make some allusion to *The Decline of the West*. They all wished to have expressed their views about it in public. Most of the critics reject it and were often quite furious and violent. It must be a great source of satisfaction to you that so many of the 'lights of learning' are united, each in his own department, to oppose you in lengthy, skilfully worked out remonstrances. The unfruitful labour and the time which is spent on this in Germany is possibly more than you have employed in writing such a wide-reaching, original, and inspired work.

The battle of opinions reminds me of Goethe's clever thoughts: *Es will der Spitz aus unserem Stall uns immerdar begleiten, Und seines Bellens lauter Schall beweist nur, dass wir reiten.*—The Pomeranian in the stable always wants to follow us, but his loud barks only show that we are out riding.

Spengler to Manfred Schroter

Munich, 8.2.21

I have read the Logos right through, and consider that it is an unworthy exhibition of German learning, something that cannot

be undone. None of the contributors has accomplished anything in his own province which entitles him to represent it. How uncertain this specialist knowledge is, is shown by the way each essay contradicts the other. In respect of the attitude of the book as a whole, these gentlemen have not only failed to understand the substance, but even determined not to understand. This is perhaps the most painful result of a dim pedantry that up to the present it has always sought to pass by or to destroy any new idea, until the force of development compels its adoption.

NOTE: Dr Koktanek points out that many of the critics were eminent in their departments, and correct in details, but that, owing to prejudice, they were not justified in their criticisms of the main trend of Spengler's work.

Oskar Beck to Spengler

9.9.21

. . . I had hoped that you would come out and see me, so that we can get to know one another from a different angle.

Unfortunately the summer is again almost over and our stay in the country is rapidly coming to an end. I can hardly remember a summer in which I have bathed so often, today it is warm enough (and in spite of a covered sky) and I am going down before lunch for revival in the water of my beloved Tegern See, we shall be here another day and there is plenty of time for a visit.

Alfred von Tirpitz to Spengler

Berlin, 10.11.21

I imagine that you have already been informed of the purchase of the saved *Scharnhorst* flag, but to make sure, and in view of your special services in obtaining this relic, may I also inform you of this, with the remark that the flag has been handed over to the naval collection at the Marine Institute and Museum, Berlin.

Oscar Beck to Spengler

31.12.21

. . . The fact that a work like your *The Decline of the West* has seen the light in Germany, one might regard as proof that, in spite of the presumption of all our enemies, German culture marches at the head, even if, like the rest of western culture, it stands at the beginning of the end. But who knows what secret plans God still has for the Germans? I only hope you will soon complete the second part, but also be able to carry out satisfactorily the recasting of volume I. You are aware how hard pressed we are in view of the excitement about your second volume, and the desire for your work to be completed. So my wish is not quite unselfish. All the less doubts will you have as to its sincerity.

Jose Ortega y Gasset to Spengler

Munich, 1921

The publishing firm Calpe, Madrid, has, at my suggestion, obtained the translation rights of your book *The Decline of the West*. It will appear in a series entitled *Ideas of the Twentieth Century* edited by me. I should be particularly pleased to be allowed to meet you while I am in Munich.

With great intellectual sympathy,

Yours truly,

Jose Ortega y Gasset,

Professor of Philosophy at the University of Madrid,

Hotel Marienbad

1922

Oscar Beck to Spengler

28.1.22

It was a not altogether insignificant relief to my feelings, when recently after a six weeks' interval a large proof slip arrived at the printing office, and a second followed today. I hope it means that you are now hard at work, so that the great work can be brought quickly to a successful termination. The demand from the trade and the public increased to an extraordinary extent in recent weeks, which is not surprising to us, and we have, as it turned out that the second volume could not appear before Christmas, consoled the people—and they needed consolation—by telling them that the second volume would appear after the beginning of the new year. It was you yourself, honoured Herr Doktor, who repeatedly gave us to understand that we could expect the missing manuscripts within a short period. Allow me to express the hope that the publication of the second volume will be possible, if not in January, at least before Easter. If that is not to be the case I do not know how we can pacify the customers any longer. The consequences would certainly not be favourable to the book. A spoilt public is well able to give vent to its disappointment in one way or another. . . .

NOTE: It may have been a mistake to hustle Spengler; the last few chapters of the second volume of the *Decline* show signs of hurry, or of tiredness.

Eleonore Niessen-Deiters de Quesada to Spengler

Easter Sunday, 1922

. . . Since our last meeting at Munich you have occupied my mind much more actively than you are aware of, and in addition to that in a way which is in every way trying and painful. Since

that day I have been suffering from a compelling idea to say to you—in respect of your work, exclusively in this connection—Oswald Spengler, ride *alone*. *Your* mount is a sure one. I have since said to myself a thousand times, that it would be an impertinent, unheard of interference, also causelessly insulting to a third party, she whom I cannot judge adequately, whom you yourself taught us to know and to value: it is no good! On the contrary, a quite unconquerable instinct tells me in such a case to be silent out of politeness, shows in the most delicate and deepest sense a lack of respect for the importance of the work of another person. So you, you who are so much cleverer, straighten this peculiar matter out. I implore you: do not be offended, either for yourself or on behalf of another. Look upon this as actually a mark of the most honourable and deepest respect for your work, if I go beyond every standard of good taste and at the risk of quite losing your recently acquired friendship (which honestly would be painful to me)—again from a persisting instinct which even I myself find dubious, I repeat most earnestly: Ride *alone*. . . .

Eleonore Niessen-Deiters de Quesada

Bad Neuenahr, 23.5.22

My husband tells me every day that I must write to you, which I know for myself. But since I realize that it was impossible to get to Munich again, I was actually more interested by the question whether volume II would appear in time before we leave. . . . But here it is, and I am set at ease. Very many thanks. Your last letter pleased me very much. Separations by distance only are accidental and unavoidable, but separations owing to some inability to agree would have been so irredeemable: an honest person cannot wish to bring others to that sin which can never be forgiven, the sin against the Holy Ghost of their own character. That you understand the motive for my appeal brings you certainly nearer to us in heart than any railway or shipping line. I also understand your motives from my whole heart and honour in every way your comradeship in the matter of strange horses. But

Oswald Spengler's work is too good for charitable burdens which moreover can be wrongly understood and suspected by the world. If I, as an old heathen, could avoid the odour of sanctity I would certainly quote a text, one that caused me much worry as a child, because it seemed to me so extraordinarily gross and rude. I mean the place when Christ said to His own mother: 'Woman, what have I to do with thee?' Later, when one is grey-haired, one suddenly sees the relation of these apparently hard words to the Man's life work which must not be disturbed, and one stands shamed by the powerful wisdom of the Revelation.

I will read volume II on the ocean and very, very much regret that you are not with us.

Ernesto Quesada to Spengler (Ocean letter)

Off Teneriffe, 10.6.22

Our *Teutonia* has just come into wireless connection with the *Argentina* going to Europe—with our greetings quite special thanks for the deep and intense enjoyment we derived from your second volume which seems to us even more important than the first.

Edgar Dacqué to Spengler

Munich, 14.6.22

As it is now your fate that lesser beings should struggle and measure their strength against your creation, so you must bear with me when after several days spent in swallowing your second volume, sent me by the publishers, I, as a limited specialist brain, remark that your brief passage on research in palaeontology overwhelmingly clearly and *correctly* repeats what the material says, in fact, shouts aloud, but which no specialist has expressed, or perhaps not yet realized. How do you arrive at such an intuition? Next Wednesday I am giving a lecture at the University on 'The History of the earth and life'—it will be under the influence of your intuitive genius. . . . I think I can trace your 'mythical' period far back in the history of primitive man, and you must not

mind—I am not yet quite certain—if I finally demonstrate to you, or render probable, the *common* mythical basis of men of *all* cultures.

That is precisely the point at which I as an investigator of the history of the earth differ from your comprehensive outlook, namely that every culture does not have its own mythical period and spirit world, but that they arise from a common source, even if the time at which each is created is naturally different. Working out this common root is my *problem*, on which I am working, and with which I hope at the same time to get beyond the narrow boundaries of my speciality, to upset the school meaning of man and his earthly age, to which they assign much too late a date, and to make myself impossible in the eyes of every 'respectable' specialist . . . my gratitude is above all in this, when I tell you what deep experiences you have brought me by your genius, and I sympathize with your compassion when you see this *Logosheft* on Spengler, where my good and learned colleagues are always in the right—poor fellows!

Adolf von Harnack to Spengler

Berlin, 16.6.22

Very sincere thanks for the kind present of volume II of your great work. I could not reply straight off, but I must not delay my letter of thanks for the book any longer, that is to say wait until I have read through the whole book with the attention it deserves—my time only allows me to read portions at a time, and with the disadvantage attendant on such interruptions of having to start again by reading the previous section. A witty description of education is that 'it is what remains over, when one has forgotten everything that one has learnt'. One can interpret that by saying when one by criticism has released oneself from everything which one has learnt. I am now convinced that your second volume belongs for me to that 'which remains over', even if single points often suggest a critical non-acceptance. Your insight into life and events, as also the way in which you show that the main problems should be regarded and brought into

consideration, I find extremely helpful and will remain with me—this apart from the enjoyment, a rare one, of finding a writer, who does not stammer, but really speaks a language, and that his own. I am also grateful to you for many Schemata of an explanatory nature, above all for the 'Pseudomorphosis'.[1] To write more today would be to anticipate.

With special admiration,

I remain,
Yours truly,
v Harnack

N.B. A small point: Pagani are not villagers as a description used by Christians for the heathen; for this description arose in a time in which the heathen had long since ceased to be 'villagers'. In fact the Christians, who defined themselves terminologically as milites (Christi), because they were bound to Christ by the military oath (sacramentum), called the heathen 'Pagani' 'civilians'; which is another meaning of the word.

Edouard Meyer to Spengler

Berlin–Lichterfelde, 25.6.22

Many of your sentences are very suggestive, often really excellent and helpful; on the other hand there are others which I must contradict sharply, and perhaps still more which I can only regard as half-truths, which I would have to modify considerably,

[1] In his criticism of vol. I of the *Decline*, Harnack suggested that S. should reconsider his assertion of the discontinuity of cultures. S. does not give in, but in vol. II introduced the mineralogical term 'pseudomorphosis'. 'The crystals are gradually washed out of a rock stratum, so that only their hollow moulds remain. Then come volcanic outbursts, molten masses pour in but they are not free to do so in their own special forms. They must fill up the spaces they find available.' Among instances of historic metamorphoses Spengler quotes Peter the Great's westernization of Russia. 'In the townless land with its primitive peasantry, cities of alien type fixed themselves like ulcers. Petersburg, says Dostoievski, is the most abstract and artificial city in the world . . . he had the feeling that one day it might vanish like the morning mist. Just so ghostly, so incredible were the Hellenistic artifact cities, scattered in the Aremaic lands. Jesus in His Galilee knew this.'

As another example of pseudomorphosis Spengler gives 'Pauline Christianity imposed on Perseo-Chaldean-Hebrew apocalyptic.' 'In the ambience of pure apocalyptic there is no intellect, for the old comrades it was simply impossible to understand him (Paul) in the least. Their living image of Jesus, whom Paul had never seen, paled in this bright hard light of concepts and propositions.'—Tr.

circumscribe, expand, or otherwise alter. You will understand that this makes a calm perusal extremely difficult. I should have to work through the book really critically, and I have not got the time. In general I can only say that in the effort to write an inclusive universal history, too much is contrived, and too much use is made of analogies and of parallel phenomena, and that thereby concepts are created with which I do not at all agree, such as, for example, the 'Arabian Culture', which plays such an important part with you. In my way of thinking this is treating in too summary a manner the unending diversity of all history and the particularity of the single event. . . . I will not go any further into what is for me, at least, the very problematic idea of the soul of a culture. Certainly there are general tendencies appearing in individuals as well as in the structure of states, extending through a whole culture circle; but over against these tendencies stands always the special political form with its attendant problems and struggles, and the uninterrupted opposition which arises therefrom. Such is the position at the present time. Behind all the surface activity rises with immense power the frightful form of soulless, purely mechanical Capitalism, which attempts to master all activities and stifles every free independent impulse and all individuality—Social Democracy has here, as happens with every *theory* which is brought into *practice*, brought about the precise opposite of what it intended; but the question which is put to us, that is not only to the German people but to the west in general, is whether sufficient strength can be developed to free us from it, or whether it crushes us, and thus the definite destruction of all that we call culture is made certain. The parallel of the end of the classical culture is before our eyes,[1] the complete rule of

[1] Spengler in the *Hour of Decision*, 1934, Chap. X, supports Meyer's views. Mommsen, 'the 1848 enthusiast', put the blame for the decline of the Roman Republic on the Senatorial class—the Priests and the 'Yunkers'. Meyer blames the well-meant efforts of the Gracchi who made a vain attempt to save the Italian small farmers, who were flocking to the towns, unable to compete with imported corn, and the slave labour imported by the rich. The Gracchi resuscitated the Tribunate and the Comitia, and thus contributed to the decline of the Senate, and of the traditions represented by the leading families. This led through Marius and Sulla to a dictatorship based on the dregs of the great towns, the underworld

capitalism as a result of a democratic movement and there with the killing of all independent life in the formal perfection of an ever richer and uniformly constituted culture state and therewith a return to primitive conditions and views and finally the unchaining of the most barbarous forces.

That our western culture has gone beyond the top and has got on to a descending bough, was clear to my consciousness on August 4, 1914, and has been confirmed from day to day in the most terrible manner. And yet it is essential to fight against it and not to give up the hope that our people, little as is its aptitude for politics, and great as its recurring inability to grasp the essential, may make the impossible possible, and once more again reach a new upgrade.

I write under the quite shattering effect of yesterday's event,[1] and it is difficult for me, and this must certainly have an effect on this letter, to collect and arrange my thoughts. . . . This event can have a still more fatal effect than the Kapp Putsch, and it is impossible to foresee what the next few weeks might bring. The moral degradation and the mental impotence of our people is terrible, we have really sunk to the level of the Roman Republic at its most degenerate . . . for the rest, we are living here in Berlin actually like machine operators—the inevitable result of a culture developed beyond a healthy degree, and in particular by the development of the great city, this creation of modern culture, through which it continually corrupts and destroys itself, as it does through capitalism, machines, and the rest of technique—and in the life of the mind in particular by pedagogic!

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 26.6.22

I have been asked by the Research Institute for Culture Morphology to solicit your support to the enclosed appeal for

in every sense of the word, decayed aristocrats like Catiline and Philip Egalité, failed academics, criminals, half-wits, and a couple of sad enthusiasts for some abstract ideal (Gregor Schlosser).—Tr.

[1] The murder of Walther Rathenau.

recruits. It is intended as an appeal to become supporters of the Institute addressed to leading personalities, in particular to those connected with German industry, and it is accompanied by a number of recommendations from scientific circles in Germany and foreign countries.

For its part the Institute intends to do all that it can to further the future plans of German industry. I should particularly like to support this plan because recently an arrangement has become about between a group of German and American newspapers; I have taken part in the conversations and personally undertaken the fulfilment of a desire that the American public should be kept au fait with important results of German science.

Apart from the above-mentioned group of newspapers, leading journals come into account for disseminating this information, which will be received from a central office in Cincinnati (this information is confidential).

Americans are greatly interested in ethnological disquisitions, more than, for instance, in the purely historical. You are also aware that the tendency of Americans to interest themselves financially in a matter increases in proportion as it is accompanied by great names. Consequently every notable signature which through your influence you can obtain for the Institute, has a practical importance of considerable value. Over there in certain circles $1,000 means very little, but in Germany a very great deal.

Crown Prince William to Spengler

Wieringen, June 1922

In friendly remembrance with very hearty thanks for the second volume of your most important work which you kindly sent me, and which I am studying at the moment with the greatest interest.

Sven Hedin to Spengler

Stockholm, 11.7.22

I ought to have written to you long ago to express my heartiest thanks for the second volume of your wonderful work *The*

Decline of the West. I am just reading it and admire your bold, acute, ideas. When everything is collapsing and when one is surrounded on all sides by innumerable insoluble problems, it is a comfort to read a book, where one at least receives an explanation of all these strange phenomena. The collapse of Germany came to me as a blow. I had blindly believed in Germany's victory. And now the unfortunate people shows itself unequal to the terrible state of affairs. Then when will the red dawn of the new day appear? I have in no wise abandoned hope of it.

Hans Pfitzner to Spengler

Schondorf, 8.8.22

Many thanks for the kind gift of your second volume of the *West*. I am reading it with great interest. Cossman told me you would like to hear the rehearsals of the Cantata. I enclose an admission card from (Bruno) Walter with a libretto. The next rehearsal is for Saturday evening, probably six o'clock; if you want more information please ring Walter not later than half past eight in the morning, Tel. 402341, also for admission to the general rehearsal.

Hans Vaihinger to Spengler

Halle, 29.8.22

My long silence after your beautiful present of the second volume of your grandiose work will surprise you, but the excuse for it is a long illness which has troubled me for half a year.... How stirring it is that you begin with the macrocosmos, and always return to it, how striking that you just as much lay stress upon the will to power, as upon the act of God (Gottzufall), how striking that you always bring forward the religious background and underground, which govern all historical events just as much as race and money, the powers in the foreground. You also bring out the ideas which govern world history, as the school of Ranke says, or which one nowadays can define better: the mad ideas by which mankind allows itself to be led and misled. . . .

[1922]

Hermann Graf Keyserling to Spengler

Friedrichsruk, Bk. Hamburg, 13.9.22

I was particularly delighted with your second volume, and to begin with I have given expression to this pleasure in the *Bookworm*. In the next number of *The Way to Perfection* I will deal at length with your ideas.[1] At the same time I have been very much interested in *Paideuma*.[2] I should like to meet the author of this book, as there is more between the lines than in them, which rouses my interest.

Spengler to Hermann Graf Keyserling

Munich, 18.9.22

In reply to your kind note I can inform you that I shall certainly be in Munich from the 15th onwards, and Leo Frobenius, whom I have informed of your visit, lives in Munich.

I should be delighted if we three could meet one day, and beg you to let me know your plans in good time.

My best thanks for your interest in my new book.

Frobenius' chief work is *Unbekannte Afrika*, at present with the printer.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Munich, 15.11.22

Ah-mm-ff! That was a noble pig, to take so much trouble after its death to taste so well. Another reason for me to hurry before you have eaten up the corpse.

[1] Keyserling also wrote a chapter on Sp. Spengler, *Der Tatsachen Mensch* in his book, *Menschen als Sinnbilder*, Men as symbols.

[2] *Paideuma* was written by Leo Frobenius. Frobenius, who led ten scientific expeditions to Africa and Asia Minor, wrote a number of books on Africa, and was an expert on West African art and culture. He founded a 'Research Institute for Culture Morphology' which did valuable work in training archaeologists. At first Spengler, who was a newcomer in the field of Frobenius, was much impressed by him, but as later letters will show, he tried to escape from his influence. The word 'Paideuma' implies an overall culture, which probably displeased Spengler.—Tr.

Today I have at last finished the recasting of [vol.] I, and feel like Üz after her examination! I shall go away next week. On the 27th I have a lecture in Oberhausen before an invited audience. From there I go to Blankenburg and stay there till the New Year if you don't kick me out. . . . Leave the index for the time being. I will bring the new vol. I with me, and afterwards we will make the fair copy together. Do you want anything for Xmas which I can get here? If so please write at once, also the number of the coloured type-writer ribbon. What shall I bring for Üz? For Trübchen perhaps a new dolls' house would be suitable.

NOTE: Üz was Spengler's niece Fraulein Hildegarde Kornhardt, who in later life did valuable work on Spengler's posthumous papers.

Elizabeth von Schmidt-Pauli[1] *to Spengler*

Kiel, 9.12.22

It had to happen that we missed one another. I sat and waited for 'the beginning of September', but in vain. Ataka von Gottberg is in Berlin—she will be for two days in Kiel between the 18th and December 22nd. Would it not be possible for you to decide to celebrate the beginning of Christmas with us here? It might be a good thing if you brought us Vikings a bit of Prussianism? I still feel a relationship with the adventurous Vikings, but supposing it degenerates into the Spirit of Capitalism entering into us!!! Perhaps my being stranded in the Institute of World Trade is already the beginning of a development into Englishness! So do come.

(A) In a week's time there is going to be a *Decline of the West* criticisms evening. Could you not attend incognito? The first criticisms evening was held the day before yesterday at the Kant Society. Everybody showed off their knowledge. If you had suddenly stood up! What would have happened?

(B) I have here some personalities for you (in particular a world bibliograph).

[1] Elizabeth von Schmidt-Pauli was an authoress—*Missa solemnis eines Lebens —R.m. Rilke, Gedenkbuch.* She was afterwards connected with the Frobenius research institute at Frankfort.

(C) A little Christmas tree and 'Vor-Weinachten' and Youth await you! Would it not be possible?

Hermann Graf Keyserling to Spengler

14.2.22

Enclosed I am sending you the last proof of an essay by me appearing in January, which defines my attitude towards you. I am not sufficiently acquainted with you to know exactly how much criticism you personally can stand. I, personally, am convinced that this work will be useful to you. In the outside world because of my warm intervention . . . on behalf of that which seems to be your true meaning . . . inwardly because perhaps in the long run you will try to correct, what, in my opinion, stands in need of correction. In any case I *had* to write as I have done, firstly, because I always take part without scruple for what I consider right, secondly because every single thing is to *me* always a symbol and an occasion for the universal for which I live. I am carrying out a definite mission, and there are no other considerations; what it is, you will understand when you read my *Creative Perception.* Of course the book is terribly dear and I cannot present any more copies. But in its turn I presented one to the Munich Library, and perhaps you can borrow it. Besides, in the book review of the same issue I am discussing more thoroughly the contents of the second volume, could not your publishers in view of these discussions treat me to a revised copy of the first volume?

Now I will turn to another subject. While our last meeting at the School of Wisdom had as its main theme 'Tension and Rhythm', I am going to speak at Munich on the 25th on this subject, and I hope we shall meet, the next will illuminate the general relationship of world outlook and the configuration of life in impressive contrast. I wanted to reserve a day for you and Frobenius—I was in Munich chiefly for that purpose, to see you both and to decide, in what form the orchestra should be, in order that you can both play first violin. I hope you will agree, it will be to your advantage. I shall ask you to speak from your

standpoint over future prospects, particularly a developing Russian culture. Frobenius might speak quite personally of the 'Original Culture'. Judging from all previous experience I can promise you that in *one* such a day you will sweep away more misunderstandings from the world and make a more positive foundation than in any other way. I shall use my art as a conductor to control the situation. You would spend a week in my pleasant house in Darmstadt, meet interesting people from all countries, be a centre of intellectual interest, and have special opportunities for canvassing on behalf of Frobenius and your Morphological Institute. I will see to that. I always do everything to put my guests in the right attitude, and their public in focus on them. If you wish to ascertain my aims, you must read *Creative Perception* —everything that is *told* about me is rubbish. . . .

Spengler to Hermann Graf Keyserling

Blankenburg, 30.12.22

I would have answered your letter before if I had not been suffering from influenza. In consequence I have only just been able to read the enclosed essay. Grateful as I am for such an analysis, it seems to me to contain two mistakes. I am not a savant, and do not intend to be one. But because this was a preliminary condition for the task, which I had set myself in these two volumes, I have adopted the mechanical technique of the savant, but only for this purpose. This purpose is now achieved, and I do not intend to make further use of it. Then metaphysics—that is the second point—should be only pursued today by such as are capable of primitive thought and feeling. For that, contact with children, dogs, cats, is required, not with young people stuffed with theoretical learning. I myself consider that it is an advantage that I have never gone through anything in the nature of a philosophical school, and I know nothing of the philosophical literature of the day. I have read none of your works except parts of the travel journal. Consequently many passages at the end of your essay remained somewhat obscure. Precisely because under the term metaphysics I can only visualize a perfectly clear and forcible

rendering of quite primitive experiences, something quite outside the smoke range from lectures, lessons, and debates, you must allow me to decline your kind proposal of a session at Darmstadt, because it would be contrary to my beliefs. By wisdom I understand something that one obtains after decades of hard practical work, quite apart from learning. There is a peasant wisdom, and a wisdom of people in positions of high responsibility, who like *der Alte Fritz* have been proved by hard fates. A school of wisdom then would be life itself, keeping it free from any connection with conscious philosophizing . . . again expressing regret not to be able to fulfil your wish, but my presence would be tantamount to agreement with the tendencies of the school.

The first volume in a new form appears in January and I will see to it that a copy goes to you.

1923

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Blankenburg/Harz, 12.1.23

Pardon me for only replying today, and thank you for sending me the little book. I have had influenza and been unable to return to Munich. I am leaving tomorrow and have a great deal to do on arrival. Therefore I should prefer that the lecture did not take place before February 7th. I had selected as a theme 'Morality and Custom', and I wanted to point out how Nietzsche was the first to notice this duality, while learned philosophy has always looked on one side only. . . .

The little book has given me much pleasure. If it was possible to display the entire range of Nietzsche's thought in a surveyable form and very strictly selected, one would then make the realist in him visible, so he would have an effect today on wide circles, which up to now have only 'read' him.

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Munich, 30.1.23

The theme shall be then, according to your wishes, entitled 'Money and Blood'.

Hugo Junkers to Spengler

Dessau, 2.3.23

On Wednesday, March 7th, on the occasion of the opening of the Leipzig Fair there will be a flight of several Junkers limousine flying machines from Berlin to Leipzig. Among other leading personalities the President of the Reich on my invitation has agreed to take part.

Allow me in the most friendly manner to invite you to take part in this little air journey. It would give me particular pleasure to use this opportunity to make you, as the author of one of our most important intellectual productions, acquainted with one of the latest products of German technique, and to be able, I hope, to convince you of the pleasures of a journey in a flying machine.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 15.3.23

As to my experiences in the propaganda affair, it is difficult to say anything briefly and by letter, but it has again become clear to me, in what an unserviceable and unintelligent condition the Press is, now as ever; for the last two years I have referred to the necessity of creating something here, which all other countries have possessed for a long time, and which is a preliminary condition of all successful politics. I have repeatedly pressed in Berlin for some of the necessary facts to be brought to the attention of public opinion abroad in a suitable form by means of an interview with English and American journalists, one fact above all, namely, the impossibility of extorting further considerable sums from Germany, next the strategic importance of the Ruhr for the new Napoleonic policy of France (the construction of an operational basin for submarines and aircraft on the north coast against England). The lack of geographical knowledge of the average Englishman is one of the most important reasons why they do not feel affected by the Ruhr action. The idea that Holland might possibly become the seat of a war between England and France might alter Dutch opinion towards France. If you are in a position to interest English and Dutch journalists in an interview of this kind, I am at your disposal at any time here or in Berlin.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Blankenburg, 30.3.23

I am coming again to Munich at the beginning of April and would

welcome it very much if I could have an interview[1] with you, then, or in Nuremberg, as soon as possible about several serious questions. It concerns above all a point which Herr Dr Blank will have discussed with you verbally; the source of certain influences on the Chief at the present moment, which has also been recognized as such by other gentlemen of your circle, and the possibility of counteracting it, was the subject some days ago in the Hotel Esplanade.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Munich, 11.4.23

If you had any idea of how to behave towards Privy Councillors, you would have followed Sclanstedt's example,[2] instead of a tactless letter, you would have sent a smoked leg of goose, a pound of butter, and some sausages, although, since the last 'attentats' there are not enough teeth in the Privy Council mouth with which to chew, and the reconstruction won't begin until next week. In the meantime, to calm your soul troubled by worn-out shirts, you must procure from Magdeburg 40 metres of quite unworn linen of the best quality, much too good for people who are not Privy Councillors, so it is only suitable for me. I should like to have shirts with changeable cuffs and shirt fronts.

Why do you want to know about sermons? As far as I am aware you only know churches from the outside. For the rest may the Lord strengthen your feeble understanding so that it may produce novels and stories as worthy to be read aloud by the men of God as the words of that unworthy knave your brother.

Sela. O.

[1] The subject discussed at the interview, according to Fräulein Kornhardt, was how to counteract the influence of Ludendorff and Hitler upon General von Seeckt. Seeckt, who had been Chief of Staff under Mackensen in the Russian campaigns, is said to have furthered the military-technical co-operation between the Wehrmacht and the Red Army, which lasted, in contravention of the Treaty of Versailles from the end of the war until the '30s.

[2] When a local landowner called on Spengler at Blankenburg, he whispered to S's sister, as he took off his hat in the hall: 'Professor or Privy Councillor?'

[1923]

Max Rychner to Spengler

Zürich, 23.3.23

At last the time is fulfilled, and the Spengler-Number[1] has appeared in the light of day. To save you any trouble, I myself prefer to disavow it at once. First of all one or two of the contributors should never have been admitted—they were of course . . . and secondly better should have been included. I knew this all perfectly well, but nothing was done about it, and what was done was only patchwork.

Further what I particularly disliked was the tone of these people. They award you second rank (Joel), and have forgotten that from where they stand, instead of an image of you, they see only the soles of your feet. Probably however it is better than having to drag along like a nightmare the fear that a dozen congenial souls might appear and produce a Spengler-Number.

I trust that you did not expect anything better, a magazine is always a bad stall in an author's vanity fair.

The little supplements by Howard and myself, thank heaven, say nothing about *The Decline*, that would have been a mistake, but like the thin notes of tuning forks express the tone in which perhaps one ought to speak about you.

When there is a mention of you I always remember Goethe's words: 'they puzzle as to who is the greater [himself and Schiller —Tr.], instead of rejoicing that they possess two such fellows, or something to that effect.'[1] And now, when the Germans have only one such fellow, they puzzle again, as to whether he really is one.

The evening in the 'Scholastika' remains unforgettable: naturally afterwards I was very dissatisfied with myself, for by that time all sorts of Orphic *Urworte* had occurred to me, which I might have whispered to you. But perhaps it was better as it was.

Spengler to Gerhard von Janson

Munich, 6.5.23

As I have already informed you by telegram, I could be in Cologne on the 14th or 15th, always provided that it is a question

[1] The Spengler-Number was a supplement in a Swiss journal *Wissen und Leben.*

of an opportunity of exercising an influence over important Englishmen. As otherwise I have business in Berlin of a similar nature, I should be glad to be informed early, in case anything can be achieved in Cologne. I take the opportunity to urge you again to bring home to the public over there the danger to England of a lasting occupation of the Ruhr. For some weeks past the *Vie Maritime*, the nationalistic organ of the French Navy, has been asking for the occupation of Bremen and Hamburg. This is reminiscent of Napoleon's plans after 1803, and the Duchy of Berg, newly created at the time, corresponds to the Ruhr. It would have a great effect in England, when one considers this development of military plans, which contemplate a complete cutting off of England, in connection with the results of the Versailles Treaty. The French air fleet is being built with the resources obtained from German reparations payments and coal deliveries, thus with money extorted from us by England. The silent endurance of French action at the moment means again a positive addition to French power, even if only a partial fulfilment of French demands is attained. There is another eventuality which must be brought home today to British public opinion: the election of the French Chamber at the end of the year. The present Chamber is elected by means of English money. If England allows Poincaré a triumph she has thereby given an election pledge, which assures the composition of a Chamber with an extreme militaristic policy. That would be the very Chamber, hand in hand with Soviet Russia, to attack England in the North Sea and Asia. Only if England now frustrates the French aim, can the elections come off in a manner more favourable to the English position. If it is possible to discuss such questions in Cologne with Englishmen who are in the position to bring influence to bear over there in a sense favourable to us, I am, as I said, at your disposal.

Spengler to Max Rychner

Munich, 27.5.23

Pardon me, if as the result of a longish journey I am only able now to thank you for the magazine, in which you drive the coach

so admirably, in spite of a pair of lame leaders. You see yourself that it is too early for a complete understanding of my views. This applies to the general ideas, as well as their application to the various branches of knowledge. However, the latter might all the same have their turn earlier than the general effect on the world outlook of our generation. Therefore I am anxious that individual investigators should make an attempt to derive something positive from my suggestions regarding the history of music, legal history, commercial history and art study. This is not a hint but only an expression of my personal experience in view of the effect that I have so far observed.

Again my best thanks.

Hans Knolle to Spengler

Unna, 30.5.23

Dear Spengler,

I have just come back from Berlin where I had official business, and used the opportunity to meet one or two of our old schoolfriends. There I learnt from Otte Most—installed Master of Law—that you are the famous O. Sp. Man, that is absolutely staggering! But in spite of the slight reflected glory of your fame which gilds our proletariat existence, because we sat on the same school bench, one is fully conscious what a miserable earthworm one is.

At the same time I heard from Mostrich that now and then you come to the Ruhr. In this lies my first request. If that happens again, take the direct train Munich-Hagen and travel 20 minutes further to Unna to stay with me, or preferably longer, in order that we can drink in peace to our alma mater in a bottle of my vintage red currant wine '21. . . . Naturally I am married. I have two charming daughters. They will be introduced to you in vain. In August I intend to fetch my wife, who has got to stay at Todtmoss for her health, back from there, and shall spend a fortnight in South Germany. This threat should make you carry out my first request as soon as possible.

Now for the second. Since I have known who you are, it has become obvious that I must obtain all your works. My own purse

has only so far sufficed for *Prussianism and Socialism*. I have bought your *Decline* I for our school library, the poverty of the institute cannot rise to II also. So I have had I at my disposal only for a week at a time and get stuck in details. It if is possible, without causing you financial loss, to get me *The Decline* from the publisher at a reduced price, you would do me an extraordinary favour. If this does not work, tell me without hesitation, and I must await a stroke of fortune which throws money into my lap, a win in the lottery, or still more improbable a rise in pay of officials in the group X/XI.

Farewell, it would be a great pleasure to hear from you. My wife and a number of friends with whom I have had occasion to talk about your work join with me in greetings.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 9.6.23

I will arrive at Berlin early on the morning of the 14th and will get in touch with you on my arrival. I should be very glad if you could keep an hour for me in the morning. Among the things which I should like to discuss with you, about which I have already spoken to Herr Haniel here, is above all the point, not touched on in the second note, although I am informed from English sources, that the question of territorial guarantees on our side must definitely be refused. Today Herr J[anson] specifically called my attention to the fact that the position was very serious, and that France is trying by all available means to make the separation of the Rheinland an accomplished fact, before a conference is held on the money question. I do not understand the shortsightedness of English policy; but as it is what it is, if France carries out its purpose, the necessity will one day arise for England to wrest back with streams of English blood, what might today be obtained by a few emphatic words. I have recently called public attention to this many times, but unfortunately by no means in the emphatic manner which is necessary to obtain an effect in England. It is the task of a Chancellor's speech to put this question before the English in all clarity. French intentions

for, at least a military, control over our North Sea coast are more and more frequently expressed, but in England the significance of their aims is not realized in the least. I consider it absolutely necessary, particularly at the present stage of preliminary negotiations, to leave no shadow of doubt that England is burdening herself with a long and severe war, if she allows France in the Ruhr. If I can be of any service in this matter, either in the form of a well-prepared interview with well-known Englishmen, or of a lecture in Berlin in any circle, in which the Chancellor must be present, I am most willing to help. But it would not be of any use unless it were done in a manner which aroused general attention. In the same connection I refer again to Italy where the circle round Mussolini are evidently beginning to form a front against France. I have asked Professor Caro to come to Berlin soon, and I should be much pleased if we could talk about his being sent to Italy, perhaps in the presence of Herr von Rosenberg, whom I told about Karo two months ago, his Italian connections and his diplomatic success in Greece (1917).

Col. Ehrhardt to Spengler

Den Oever-Wieringen, 20.6.23

I have just informed you by telephone at the Victoria Hotel, but I will write to make sure.

His Royal Highness requests you to dine with him on Friday, the 22nd of this month. You must travel by the 3.11 in the afternoon from Amsterdam via Schagen (change here) to Ewijckstein, from where the ship leaves at 6.30. I will have you fetched or fetch you myself at 7 p.m. from the harbour. You will spend the night here in Den Oever in our small temporary quarters, and leave on Saturday morning at 8 o'clock.

Alfred Ball to Spengler

Berlin, 23.6.23

Reichert, a member of Parliament, who has been informed by Commercial Councillor Reusch of your willingness to write for

The Times an article over the risks for England of a new coalition war, has proposed to us to give this article a prominent position in *The Times* or the *Westminster Gazette* or the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Through our agent we have placed ourselves in connection with the newspapers in question and with another important London publication, which throughout show great interest in an article signed by you. In consideration of the likelihood, which cannot for the time being be judged, of the insertion of your article outside the publications which have been approached, there is still a general wish to be allowed to see the manuscript. We pass on this wish to you herewith. . . .

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Blankenburg/Harz, 5.7.23

At the moment I must stay in bed for two days as the result of a lung inflammation which got worse on the journey: on or about Sunday, July 8th, I return to Munich. It is very important for me to see you as soon as possible, particularly after a long conversation I had with Exc. von Lossberg in Münster. In case you are in Nürnberg, and time permits you to keep an hour free for me early on Monday, please telegraph to me here and I will leave by the night express.

Regarding the possibility of influencing English public opinion by demonstrating the strategic importance of the Ruhr, for which the English air fleet proposal offers a particularly favourable opportunity, Herr R. with whom I spoke in your room, unfortunately has no useful connections. Particularly after my impressions in Holland I regard it as possible and in fact absolutely necessary to exert this influence.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 11.7.23

I should be very sorry if your time does not permit a conversation next week. Among the impressions which I brought back from Holland, and particularly from Amsterdam, is this—that a

very severe internal political crisis in the course of the summer can only be avoided, if, instead of the attempts gradually becoming more and more meaningless at stabilization, an abandonment of the mark and the adoption of a proper gold currency could be carried out.[1] The nervousness among the population over the madly increasing so-called 'scarcity', that is to say the impossibility of bringing the small daily needs into a stable relation with any sort of figures, has today forced all discussion

[1] In November 1923, the amount of marks in circulation was estimated at 440,338,326,350,700,000,000. The value of the Rentenmark was fixed at a billion marks; 4·2 billion marks were equal to a dollar. In 1924 a higher degree of stabilization was achieved under the Dawes plan with the 'gold exchange mark'.

Among the well-known results of the inflation were: the undernourishment of the working class—the ruination of the middle class who lived on investments and salaries, and became thus bitter enemies of the Weimar Republic—the concentration of industry owing to shareholders having to sell out to meet the rising cost of living or from inability to meet calls for fresh capital; these shares were often taken up by holding companies—hence Spengler's abuse of 'Boersenhaendler' speculators. This process greatly aided the rationalization of industry.

There was another, and a far-reaching result of the inflation. The fear of a repetition of these conditions was so great that in the crisis of 1930 the 'obvious', if unorthodox, remedy was not applied. The Bruening Government adopted deflationary measures, thus making the position worse. To quote Prof Noell v.d. Nahmer—'If, during the period of the inflation, the quantity theory was totally neglected, now this ruling theory was wrongly interpreted. It was believed that every additional creation of money *must* lead to price inflation, it was completely overlooked that price rises were not to be expected so long as increasing demand was met by a corresponding increase of available goods. That with millions of unemployed, large supplies of raw materials, and only an insufficiency of production, this condition could be fulfilled, needs no further explanation. The non-recognition of an apparently obvious relation between economic facts was fatal. People living in States holding to traditional economic ideas were starving unnecessarily in spite of full granaries, while in communistic Russia there was full employment and progressive industrialization.'

The remedy was unfortunately left to the Nazis, who in 1933 and 1934 invested 6 milliards of reichsmarks on public works without causing inflation. The Bruening Government had proposed similar action, but could not overcome the opposition of Schacht, who was President of the Reichsbank. The 6,000,000 totally unemployed, and many more half employed were soon absorbed. The Nazi action made the bulk of the nation followers of Hitler—they followed him, in fact, to the bitter end—and dazzled the rest of the world, which for some time remained blind to his actual intentions.

In 1933, also, Roosevelt followed the same course with his New Deal, the Tennessee river dam, etc. Tr.

of foreign political affairs into the background. The only subject of conversation is prices, and instead of a perception of the national poverty which is veiled by the rising figures, there is an outcry about usurers, which is the sign of an internal crisis.

In Germany, perhaps, one hides from oneself the greatness of the danger, seen from abroad it appears to be already unavoidable. In consequence we ought to be forearmed for all possibilities, but from conversations with Herr L. in Münster, and with others I have gathered the impression that nothing whatever has been arranged for certain eventualities.

Paul Reusch to Spengler

Nürnberg, 16.7.23

I consider it quite out of the question for us to go over to an actual gold currency, before the Reparations question has been finally settled. Herr von Lossberg is not in the picture regarding what has happened, and what is happening, so that your fears, which you connect with a conversation with him, are not fully justified.

Many thanks for the work you have put into the list for the German Museum. I will forward the classification to the Museum giving your name.

August Winnig to Spengler

Potsdam, 24.7.23

In a short time Cotta will publish a little book by me. This book is dedicated to you, or will be, unless you protest violently against it. The dedication is addressed not so much to the author of the most important work that has been written in this generation, rather to the son of the home dear to us both in the Harz mountains.

I beg you to accept the dedication. You are under no obligation to read the whole book but perhaps you will cast a glance at

the first chapter 'Home and Family', which I have the honour of forwarding you in the proofsheets.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 17.8.23

Unfortunately I have missed you recently; also in Berlin it was not possible. . . . The change of Chancellor Cuno to Stresemann entails a defeat for industry, and I still believe that it might have been avoided or at least postponed, if at least a temporary solution could have been found for the currency question, and thereby the so-called scarcity would not have excited public opinion to such an extent. I consider the Chancellorship of Stresemann only as a pasting over of the crisis. If the gold loan, which a vote of confidence envisages, is a failure, we shall have this fact before our eyes in its most extreme form. In any case, the Chancellor's attempt to maintain his position by his biased oratorical gifts will gradually lead to his choosing the words, and the left choosing the deeds. . . .

Paul Reusch to Major General Hasse

Nüremberg, 23.8.23

On the occasion of our last meeting you were kind enough to say that you would consult His Excellency v. Seeckt when Herr Dr Oswald *Spengler* could have an interview with Excellency von Seeckt. Herr Spengler will be in Berlin for the week September 10th–16th but is ready to come to Berlin at any other time appointed by His Excellency von Seeckt.

Paul Reusch to Spengler

Nürnberg, 23.8.23

After you had left Berlin I received the draft for the creation of a staple currency, which has been worked out by Dr Helfferich.[1] I forward as an enclosure a copy of this draft for your strictly confidential information.

[1] Helfferich proposed a Ryemark, on which the Rentenmark was largely based.

Crown Princess Cecilia to Spengler

Oels Castle, 23.8.23

I thank you very much for sending me the new edition of your first volume of *The Decline of the West*. It will be a valuable remembrance of your visit to Cicilienhof. The splendid single volume edition much delights my heart, for I possess the first and second volume only in the single edition.

Owing to the burning questions of the day, the discussion of which with you was so instructive and interesting, I did not hear enough about the highly complicated, but so *exceedingly* fascinating method in which you write history. I very much hope that one day you will be going to Silesia, and then come on here to Oels, or once again to Potsdam. That would be a great pleasure for me.

God grant that, in spite of the doubts that are expressed at the present time, the return of my husband is no longer very far off, and in addition that our people may be making a beginning to rise out of their utter misery.

With repeated hearty thanks and best wishes.

Yours very sincerely,

Alfred Hugenberg to Spengler

Berlin, 25.8.23

I have received letters today from Herr Forest-Councillor Escherich[1] and from Dr Rulenkampff regarding Herr Major Wäninger. I am reminded thereby of our conversations regarding him and again feel how very much the association that we have

[1] Forest-Councillor Escherich was a close friend of Spengler's and contributed to a volume of obituary tributes to him.

He remarked on Spengler's great interest in forestry, adding, perhaps with *The Decline* in mind, that S. had a wonderful grasp of the subject, the wood, even if he might make a few mistakes with regard to individual trees. Spengler wrote in favour of restrictions against landowners selling off large tracts of forest owing to the difficulty of importing pulp; he considered that the future demand for pulp was a threat to the 'slow growing conifers of the northern hemisphere', and wondered if there was a possibility of using soft wood from tropical rain forests. He feared a gradual *Versteppung* such as had befallen the Adriatic coast, constituting a threat to soil and climate. S. was greatly interested in primeval forest, such as the remnant of the Hercynian forest, and the forests of Bosnia, which

fallen into regarding W. lies outside the radius of affairs, for the regular development of which I can undertake any guarantee. I will shortly place 50 cwt. rye 'Rentenbriefe' for disposal, earmarked exclusively for the needs of Herr W. . . . With this payment I should like to be relieved of further action in the W. affair. . . . Present circumstances make it necessary to withdraw here and there, and to refrain from carrying out things which are in themselves desirable. I should be grateful if you would inform me at Rohbraken, in what way the transfer of 50 cwt. rye Rentenbriefe—today about 300,000,000 marks—is to be made.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 27.8.23

I have received your letter with the currency proposal (by Helfferich). I would rather give my opinion on it by word of mouth. Today I would ask you urgently, if it is at all possible, to take part in the confidential meeting which is to be held on Sunday, October 2nd, at 10 a.m. in connection with the discussion on foreign affairs. It is concerned with press and news questions, as to which I can give some very important information about steps which have been taken by the new men of the left in the interests of their parties, and through public channels: among others Vögler, Hugenburg, Klitsch and some gentlemen from the board of the union of German newspaper publishers have promised to be present. Dr Cossmann asked me to request you in his name to attend.

Escherich described to him. The disadvantage of man-made forest was, he thought, the abolition of competition!

Conifers did not appeal to his poetic instincts. They were typical of 'Classical' as opposed to 'Faustian' man. Cypresses and pines with their corporeal and Euclidean effect could never have become symbols of unending space. The rustle of the woods, a charm that no classical poet ever felt—for it lies beyond the range of Apollinian nature-feeling—its merging of the present into Eternity. Deciduous forest has a great appeal to German poets, who invented the word *Waldeinsamkeit*.

Like others, Spengler attributed the Gothic cathedral, 'the giant windows by which the wall is dissolved, and the interior filled with mysterious light' to 'the endless, lonely, twilight wood'. *Decline*, vol. I, page 396.

Erich Ludendorff to Spengler

Munich, 3.9.23

Would you give us the pleasure of coming to tea on Friday the 8th, 4.15 as usual?

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 9.9.23

Herr *Fehling* writes to me that an approach through General Smuts would hold promise of success, but that application must be made to the Government before it can be undertaken. We all know that the Government does not understand or dare to consider anything of that sort, and over and above this I have been assured, as the result of written inquiry addressed to a gentleman in close touch with the Chancellor, that in the Reparations questions they have neither an aim nor any tactical intentions. So it is entirely left over to private initiative. If nothing is done from this quarter, nothing at all will happen; it is thus necessary that the suggestion to General Smuts comes from us. I have written in this sense to Fehling, and would ask for your support. As I cannot travel before the 15th, I have requested him to name a day in the second half of the month, on which it is possible for us to have an interview in Berlin or Hamburg. Dr Reichert tells me confidentially that the Government is making an attempt to shuffle out of the odium arising from the cessation of passive resistance[1] by transferring it to the Ruhr industry. Both the Finance Minister Hilferding, as well as the entourage of Chancellor Stresemann, are spreading an allegation that the last collapse of the mark was brought about by speculative purchases of exchange on the part of the Ruhr industry, among which were government funds held in readiness for passive resistance; that, as a result of this, the financial position has become so bad that passive resis-

[1] The Reparations Commission, in spite of British opposition, announced that Germany was in arrears with payment of reparations, and on 11.1.23 French and Belgian troops occupied the Ruhr. Germany proclaimed passive resistance—a general strike, but the mines went on working (the owners were frightened of what would happen if they shut down), and the coal was left at pithead for the French to remove. 'Passive resistance' ceased in August.

tance can no longer be paid for, also that the Government has fallen into a crisis as a result of this speculation. One can have no doubts as to the significance of this allegation, to which allusions are made in the commercial sections of the leading newspapers. It means that the Stresemann Government, in order to remain in power, is sacrificing the most important economic factor—industry—to public opinion, and that thereby extreme socialistic measures may appear to be justifiable, quite disregarding the fact that the exasperation in nationalistic circles over the capitulation to France has a very definite purpose. A firm standpoint on the part of Hugo Stinnes, disregarding newspaper libels, would be decisive. It is absolutely necessary that a protest should be published at once, bearing the signatures of the best-known personalities in the Ruhr, pointing out the real reason for this allegation, with an exculpation based on figures. This is the only way to prevent national circles being robbed of their most important economic factor.

Paul Reusch to Spengler

11.9.23

Although I also am of the opinion that it is not necessary to support an approach to General Smuts by an instruction from the Government, I would however consider it desirable that the Government should know of the step beforehand, and express its approval. If you come next week to Berlin, could you not confer with the Chancellor on this question?

The cessation of Passive Resistance. I have known for some time that the Chancellor and Hilferding are hawking round the allegation that the collapse of the mark is to be attributed to speculative exchange purchases by the Ruhr heavy industry. I shall have an opportunity today of conferring with Stresemann on the subject.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 15.9.23

I shall arrive at Berlin early on the 20th and announce myself to Excellency v. Seeckt for the afternoon. As Herr Fehling makes

the approach to General Smuts dependent on an understanding with the Foreign Office, I should like to speak to the Chancellor for a moment and ask for your help as an intermediary.

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Munich, 18.9.23

. . . It is possible that on the return journey [from Berlin] I can come to Weimar, but owing to the unpredictable state of affairs I cannot make any promise. The conditions of the book market are bad enough at the moment; I think however that the public is gradually becoming accustomed to the new price arrangements. I should like to take the opportunity to inquire what is happening with regard to the translation of Nietzsche. I am treating at the moment with one of the leading firms in England, and would have the opportunity of setting in motion the question of a well thought out complete edition. . . .

Spengler to Gustav Stresemann

Blankenburg, 26.9.23

During the last five days to my regret it has not been possible for me to discuss with you a matter, the settlement of which at this moment appears to me important. I have, it is true, requested Herr General-Direktor Vögler to communicate with you verbally, but I think it better to put all the details before you in writing. I have the opportunity to approach at any time the European representative of General Smuts. The General has radically changed his political views in the course of the last year, and now is on the side of the outspoken enemies of France in English politics. His influence in England is extremely great owing to his position in South Africa; at the Imperial Conference he appears in certain respects as the chief representative of the Colonies. I have been informed by people in Holland and in Hamburg, who have been closely associated with him for years and some of whom are related to him, that he considers the Treaty of Versailles and its results as a political misfortune for England itself. On the other

hand he it was who, when consulted as an old soldier on the Reparations problem, suggested and put through the admission of pensions, through which the reparation total figures rose to the extent which has been the cause of the tragic events of recent years. I have been unanimously informed by circles who know the General that he would not be averse to a suggestion that doubts might be cast on some of the items put up by him in the first place. The approaching negotiations on the Reparations question would be placed on a new basis, and would also appear in the judgment of the English people in a new light, if one began, instead of discussing the height of the total amount, by casting doubt on the justification of single items. If the General himself has doubts about the largest of these items, which were put forward by him himself, a necessary result in the course of negotiation will be that one item after another appears doubtful, and the whole structure will become uncertain. An approach to the General's representative has been made dependent upon a guarantee being given that the German Government is not pursuing quite different aims. The moment that I receive this guarantee from the German Government, I am in a position to make this approach at any time. As it has not been possible for me to speak to you on the subject, I have unfolded the facts as above and beg you to let me have an answer as soon as possible as the General lands in England in a few days' time. If you attach value to a verbal discussion, I can come to Berlin on September 30th. For private reasons I cannot make the journey later. A verbal interview would be of importance to me in any case, as I believe myself to be better informed about the internal state of Bavaria than is possible for most gentlemen resident in Berlin. I had opportunity to make some revelations to His Excellency von Seeckt which I could elaborate to you.

Spengler to Gerhard von Janson

Munich, 5.10.23

At my request the MNN [*Münchne Neueste Nachrichten*] and the *München-Augsburger Abend Zeitung* have started a strong

personal polemic against Str[esemann]. Please set everything in motion that the matter is taken up in the Berlin and provincial Press. It seems to me to be the right time to form a fighting party out of all the *Reichsparteien*, like the one-time Fatherland party, on a basis of a future National Party. It is necessary immediately to collect (excepting all those already parliamentarily established) a small number of known leaders of agriculture and industry, also of unprejudiced members of the German National Party and the Centrum, who feel themselves under an obligation to have nothing whatever to do with Socialism and parliamentary *Wurstelei*. I agree with your views throughout, but we need a centre point for the efforts being made all over Germany for the same purpose.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 9.10.23

While *Imperial Chancellor Stresemann* has been fully occupied in the last few days with cabinet matters, I have received a day or two ago a message of assent in the Smuts affair, too late for a verbal interview. In the meantime, I had received through Ebert an authorization desired by the other side, and the result is the enclosed copy of a letter from Fehling, which the General will have received in good time. It would naturally be of the greatest importance if, at the coming meeting, you mentioned the Reparations question in the same spirit. The letter for obvious reasons has been very carefully expressed, because the General has already been sharply attacked in South Africa by General Herzog precisely on account of the pensions and therefore may be a little sensitive. Anyway he will be conscious of the significance of a move on our part. He will be able to survey the economic condition of Germany widely enough to convince himself that either the Reparations total must be small or that France must have a free hand, because the payment of a greater amount is altogether impossible owing to our collapse. In the course of the conversation it might perhaps be established whether the General today is still of opinion on the whole that we should bear the entire cost because we are to blame for the war. If that is not the case he can

easily, as an honourable soldier, say in public that the defeated can traditionally be compelled to pay tribute, but that the moral foundation on war guilt is a phrase from which only French policy is drawing advantages.

If a man like him says to the English that this method is unfair, he will make a very deep impression. If further he raises doubts as to the height of the amount and recommends cancelling the chief items, which he himself introduced, he thus presents English policy with the means, for which it has long been looking, to get out of the entire enforcement of the Versailles Treaty without loss of face.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 9.10.23

In order to be on the safe side, I inform you that a letter, with a copy of the letter sent to London regarding the Smuts affair, has been sent to you at The Hague. The step has therefore been taken in the desired form.

Walter Fehling to Karlos Spilhaus (attached to letter Spengler to Paul Reusch of 2.11.23)

Herrn Karlos Spilhaus
c/o High Commissioner, South Africa, London

2.10.23

I have received a request from a well-informed quarter, which is not acting without authorization, to lay before you the following train of thought. You know that the Reparations question represents today the focus of all our troubles. Personally, both from my South African experience and especially from your descriptions, I know the General to be an upright and fearless man, and I go so far as to believe that he himself would not hesitate to attack the wasps' nest of the Reparations question. I believe that it is in keeping with the character of a man like Smuts, and that it would have a great effect on the world, if he were to take up the stand-

point that an idea, founded on his juristic approval, should subsequently be revised on economic and statesman-like grounds. Action by the General in this direction would be of fundamental importance as affecting the maintenance of the French demands. I could imagine that Smuts, who then, as now, was a supporter of the idea of the League of Nations, would be ready perhaps to make the admission of Germany morally possible, with the reparation idea brought under revision, and Germany accepted under the new contract. . . .

Erich Ludendorff to Spengler

Munich, 21.10.23

My wife and I would be delighted if you would come to tea again, perhaps the 6th or 7th. I would ask a Herr Gatzen, a remarkable man who is very much occupied in currency affairs and thus offers an attraction.

Spengler to Gerhard von Janson

Munich, 28.10.23

On account of the position here it is impossible to come earlier. If someone does not put the brake on the stupidity and mutual jealousy of the leaders, the greatest follies will come to pass. . . . I will be in Berlin early on Wednesday, and must be back on Sunday evening unless something unforeseen happens. L[udendorff] would like to be von Seeckt's successor!!!

Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck to Spengler

Bremen, 28.10.23

The English taking part in a dinner to be given in honour of General Smuts announced their intention of inviting me. The Foreign Office in Berlin, from whom I received the letter through the embassy in London, proposed to refuse, because 'the time for an approach to English military circles did not appear to have

been well chosen'. In addition to this it is at least a question also whether, in view of the relations with France, which did not permit subjection to any strain, a visit from German officers at this time would be agreeable to the British Government. As I believe that, in accordance with English political discipline, the approval of the English Government has long been obtained, and that the relations between England and France do not need to cast the balance unconditionally in respect to decisions affecting Germany, furthermore that an approach or a contact with English circles, particularly with General Smuts, might be useful under the circumstances, so with the approval of Excellence v. Kahr I replied that it would be a great honour to me to accept the invitation. Just now I have received information from England that the meeting has been put off because General Smuts has been temporarily delayed. The concluding sentence is of interest: 'Perhaps I may be permitted to renew the hope that on some future occasion General von Lettow-Vorbeck[1] may be able to attend such a reunion and so help to restore the friendly relations which existed so long between our two nations.' It does appear that sentiment will be created in England on behalf of Germany, and with the clearly increasing importance of General Smuts it appears that this aim should be taken seriously. . . .

[1] When v. Lettow attended the East African reunion dinner, the cheering was so loud, as he entered the room, that his wife, who accompanied him, was quite frightened. He had fought for the Boers in the Boer war, on leave from the German army, but had not met Smuts. He had, of course, a great reputation in Germany. He was induced to come in after the Armistice on his way towards Angola, and arrived in Dar-es-Salaam with forty whites, 1,000 askari, and 3,000 porters. In addition to his other qualities he had a sense of humour; after obtaining medical supplies though a message purporting to come from a British unit, he sent a message of thanks signed by himself. After the war he collected money in Germany to meet the back pay of his askari, which he had demanded as a condition of surrender, but which the Army Council refused to allow.

He dragged Schnee, the Governor of German East Africa, round with him in the bush for most of the war to maintain the fiction of a Government *in esse*. He did not forgive Schnee for refusing to allow him to attack Kilindini-Mombasa, which was relatively weakly defended, in August 1914. Schnee fully believed that the war would not reach Africa. Looking back, it seems a pity that he was not right.

Spengler to Gerhard von Janson

Munich, 30.10.23

In view of the new crisis I cannot escape this evening. I regret this extremely, all the more as many things cannot be put in writing. Regarding the Press affair, put . . . in a position to give me all information when I come to Berlin. As regards the internal position, you might contribute materially to a favourable development, if you removed all doubts in O.P. that the replacement of the Str[esemann]–See[ckt] dictatorship by an unparliamentary one is necessary if everything is not to go to pieces. Kahr is holding out from day to day against clerical-particularistic pressure in the hope of such an eventuality in the north, but it cannot go on long. The Knilling party makes it impossible for him to cover the expenses of his office, apart from doing anything for the formations. Since the fall of Cuno, instead of a foreign and economic policy, all we have had is a struggle for position between noisy factions. The Rentenmark will collapse as a result. In the army in northern Germany the young officers and men are overwhelmingly against See[ckt]. There is no room today for an opportunist, else everything goes to the devil.

Spengler to Reinhold Quartz

Munich, 30.10.23

. . . K[ahr] is completely worn out in his struggle. The opposition, less that of Hitler Lud[endorff] than of clerical-particularistic circles, can *only* be parried in the north by success. K[ahr] is holding on from day to day in the hope of the fall of Stre[semann] and See[ckt]. It cannot go on long like that or he will collapse, and with him the country. Rupp[recht] also, to whom I have spoken, does not take up a strong position against the clericals. The ducal line is no longer popular (only for you).

The German Fatherland Party must now drop *all* other considerations. They and their friends must not only fractionally but in full session take measures against Gustav [Adolf]. That would be an enormous success for the national cause and would have a

saving effect generally. Only because the DVP[1] has repeatedly bargained with the Socialists has this dictatorship of business politicians been possible. Remember: since the departure of Rosenberg we have had no foreign policy—at the time of the London conference!

Regarding economic recovery there is nothing but talk. The reduction of officials, the Labour Law, are farces. For two months the Government has done nothing except to stay in office. So it will go on until Stresemann disappears. And with him See[ckt]. The army is tottering to its fall. It all centres on this. An opportunist at the top is the worst possible thing. But for him Str[esemann] would have been finished long ago, and now he is relying on him to retain a hold on military circles. In a fortnight the army can collapse like the old army in November 1918. It is time therefore for the right wing to pull itself together. Five votes could upset everything. If you supply the impulse, you will have made a step forward in national progress, either in the form of a newspaper article or—better still—in full session,[2] it does not matter which, *brusque action* is all that is necessary.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 31.10.23

Regarding your visit to London, it would interest you to know that General von Lettow-Vorbeck has been invited from there to a banquet at which General Smuts will be present. Possibly the invitation by English military circles will be extended to other gentlemen. The date is not fixed, but the invitation shows, in any case, how well the soil is prepared for action.

I have received this information confidentially from L.V. himself. The attitude of Herr v. S[eeckt] is less satisfactory. I approached him briefly through you on 20.10. He reveals himself however as a self-confessed opportunist, who lays claim to an undisputed authority in his management of affairs, which is far from existent.

[1] The DVP *Deutsche Volks Partei* was Stresemann's party.

[2] Quartz was a member of the Reichstag.

Unfortunately this place is no exception to the quite open disaffection. In the other branches also only the elder directors [officers] are his supporters, while younger circles are taking up their stand more and more openly on the side of the local [Munich] firm, which has left the concern. In addition there is increasing distrust among the private associations, whom he leaves in no doubt as to his hostile intentions. After a short period of hesitation the conviction has been arrived at in informed quarters that the concern [the army] can only be saved from complete dissolution by the resignation of the General-Director. He has been told this from different quarters in the most uncompromising form; so far this has only had the result that he has begun to play the part of Wallenstein. The consequence can be unpredictable. . . . As regards the tea, the customs have inquired as to the value from the firm. Please arrange this and let me know the amount, so that I can remit to you.

Reinhold Quartz to Spengler

Berlin, 31.10.23

Many thanks for your letter. Our work in the last few days has been almost entirely devoted to the aims mentioned by you. The alliance between Seeckt and Stresemann is apparently at an end. The army is demanding a national government.

Further information preferably by word of mouth. Look out for telephone and letter spies. . . .

Kahr is very popular here in North Germany.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 4.11.23

Some months ago I suggested, to you among others, that it is necessary to have a satirical journal of the most pungent kind on the nationalist side of politics, and I thought therefore of acquiring an already existing journal, as to start a new one is out of the question in view of our economic position. I have now

learnt that the best known of them, *Simplicissimus*, is on the point of liquidization which will be *completed* within a few weeks, unless the last steps can be postponed for a time by transference to a share company. The amounts in question are small, the possibility presents itself of building up the undertaking, which has been incompetently managed, on a large scale. . . . My interest in this is purely political, for I rate the effect of satire on the present mood of our people as very high.

Paul Reusch to Spengler

6.11.23

Subject: *v. Seeckt*

So far as I am in the picture, a hopeless muddle has been made on both sides. Serious mistakes have been made in Berlin and Munich, which will be bitterly avenged in the future. With some goodwill it must be possible to avoid these differences.

Paul Reusch to Spengler

7.11.23

Before I take action in the [*Simplicissimus*] matter, I must know what is the amount of money involved. I would then willingly undertake to put the matter before Herr Deventer. . . . The reply of the Foreign Office to Lettow-Vorbeck is typical of that department.

Spengler to Hermann Munzing

Berlin, 18.11.23

. . . Stresemann is again trying to save himself. Even Socialists are acceptable to him. The matter will be decided early on Monday. In any case a further depreciation of the mark, at least 4 billions, must be expected. The Rentenmark issued yesterday have completely disappeared. Nothing more can be put in writing. Destroy this letter.

Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck to Spengler

Bremen, 19.11.23

I have not been able to obtain any clear information as to what happened in Munich. Local versions consist almost without exception of such monstrous accusations against Exc. von Kahr, that I must look upon them as erroneous or subjectively coloured.

The following facts seem to me to be established: on the night of 8.11 after struggling against it for a long time, Kahr decided to join with Hitler, then after separating from Hitler he changed his mind together with Lossow and Seisser.

On November 9th the army opened fire on a National Socialist procession. That Kahr withdrew his pledge to Hitler can be explained by his conviction that otherwise Hitler would deprive him of the leadership. There is a contradiction however between the public statement of General von Lossow, that he had informed Hitler and Ludendorff through a Col. of the Reichswehr, on November 9th, of Kahr's change of intention, and the allegation generally current here that no such notification took place. The use of force against the National Socialist demonstration could have been a natural consequence of Kahr's change of mind. The generally asserted fact that fire was opened on the demonstration without warning, that is to say without notification of Kahr's change of mind, is incomprehensible. I hold it as quite out of keeping with the personality of Kahr that he gave the order for this action. The deeply regrettable incident calls forth, however, general indignation against Kahr and offers a convenient handle for propaganda against him. Yet there are a thousand possible explanations. In such agitated times guns go off easily of themselves, a subordinate leader can take action, and quite bona fide, of which his senior is unaware. Misunderstandings too of all sort take place. Even the opinion of a Ludendorff cannot convince me that Kahr acted in such a dishonest and untrustworthy manner, and it is essential to get at the truth. Be good enough, Herr Doctor, to give me an account of what happened, at least in relation to the chief points I have mentioned. I should be very grateful.

Spengler to Nicholaus Cossmann

Munich, 1.12.23

I regret that my explanation was somewhat offensive to you, and I beg you to pardon me on account of the effect of the Hitler Putsch, which no one can escape. You know that it is exclusively on national grounds that I have attacked the newspaper, and only because I know the enormous importance of the Press in our politics.

As regards the less important point, it is my opinion, also, that a newspaper has no right to bring the private life of politicians before the public—so long as it remains private life. But if it, for instance, by dependence on financial groups, has an influence on political decisions, it is the duty of the Press to take the lead against this regardlessly. In England this has always been the rule, and in my opinion in the case of Str[esemann][1] there was a duty to create an exact knowledge of the circumstances, which in Reichstag circles were by no means a secret, and to make this fatal connection a subject of criticism. A newspaper cannot be disparaged by this criticism, but at most by the form it takes. Criticism itself, as I have said, is one of the political duties of the Press, which in England it has never shirked.

But the subject with which in our conversation at that time I, in the first instance, based my reproach of the MNN, a reproach which to my regret I must maintain, is its fundamental silence regarding the Hitler movement. It is, and remains, my conviction that there would never have been such tension, still less an explosion, if the leading newspaper from the beginning had by its criticism guided the movement into a reasonable direction or hindered its extension. I have been unceasingly pressing for this since the summer of 1921. At that time there was still time to develop something useful to the national movement on a basis of reasonable ideas. Instead of this the newspaper has preserved from month to month a complete silence in face of the most senseless outbursts, while giving publicity to Hitler and

[1] Spengler maintained that Stresemann was connected with the finance firm, Wolff.

Ludendorff's announcements and speeches in a conspicuous place. You yourself asked me once last autumn to influence Dr G[erlich] to stop these tactics. You complained at that time of his journalistic unreliability, and his tendency to replace comments on the day's events by abstract articles. . . . In my anxiety as to the possible results of the Hitler movement, I brought about an expression of views in which, in addition to you, Privy Councillor Schulmann was present in the course of which it was urgently represented to Dr G[erlich] that he should at least decide on a polemic against this movement. This had not the slightest success. . . . On the contrary, when in late autumn the Government had to proclaim a state of siege to stop a Putsch, the MNN, in spite of all ifs and buts, made no secret of their objection to this decision. . . . The national associations, which did not stand behind Hitler, have never reached the stage of their announcements of meetings being treated with such consideration. It has not been possible to obtain any criticism of Ludendorff's political failures. This obstinate silence or partisanship has at last been regarded in very wide circles as fatal. On May 1st a Putsch was planned, which failed of its own ridiculousness, then at last the MNN plucked up courage to join in the general laughter—for one day only. From then on, in spite of the most forcible representations and warnings, nothing was achieved which could have hindered the approaching catastrophe. When on November 9th, when it was too late, the bitterest mockery was poured out over Hitler, the effect in wide circles was painful, when one compared it with the attitude of the whole preceding year. This fundamental silence is more than anything else responsible for the true character and the seriousness of this movement not being recognized outside Bavaria. A criticism, however cautiously worded, could never have allowed anyone to imagine that this enterprise would bring about the liberation of Germany. In my warnings I have always pointed out that the Press has it in its power to help or to hinder such a movement. The tactic of approving silence was tantamount to help. . . . In the last weeks before the Putsch, when the danger drew nearer every day, and when Hitler in view of the inactivity of the General State Commissioner could no

longer control the excitement of his following, the MNN neither criticized this inactivity with one line, nor alluded to the preparations for the Putsch. . . . All this could have been prevented if Kahr had had a Press which give him prominence, instead of merely registering his utterances. Now begins the struggle between the national movement, which has been struck to the heart by the Hitler Putsch, and Bavarian Clericalism for whom the privileges of Bavaria are vastly more important than the existence of the Reich. Here again I fear an absolute silence will be the rule. . . .

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 3.12.23

On the assumption that Professor Cossman has sent you a copy of his letter, I am sending you my answer. I consider the tactical failure of the MNN in the critical circumstances here so fatal, that I would ask you to use your influence to bring about a change. In yesterday's evening edition there is a long article by Absberg stating that the present structure of the Reich should be replaced by another, based on mutual agreements between the States and not a decision of the Reichstag. This is equivalent to a dissolution of the Reich, in the sense of the worst Bavarian separatism. Is it really the business of the MNN to support these tendencies? I would ask you to inform Herr *Haniel* of my letter. I have often discussed with him the dangers involved in Dr Gerlich's partisanship for Hitler.

Paul Reusch to Spengler

Nürnberg, 2.12.23

Simplicissimus—I gather from Herr von Derventer that it is not impossible that he is interested in purchasing a majority of the shares. I should be obliged if you would inform me of the circumstances, and in particular what is the lowest amount asked for a majority of the shares.

Spengler to Wilhelm Walter

Blankenburg, 30.12.23

Your letter of 22.12 has been forwarded to me here. I am much obliged to you for your proposals: but I believe that the making known in England of the Franco-Czech negotiations has created a favourable mood for the publication of a very strong article, and that its anti-French tendency is no longer an objection.

Please send me a translation and possibly the letter of your English friend so that I can communicate it further. I consider it desirable to allude again, and in every imaginable form, to England's military position in the event of a permanent occupation [of the Ruhr]. It is almost the only subject which can make an Englishman nervous and so inclined to take a serious step.

I will gladly accept an invitation to speak to your circle on a political or economic theme, but request that it may be postponed until February or later, as I need January to finish a longish book.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Blankenburg/Harz, 30.12.23

In the matter of the periodical *Simplicissimus*, I can give you more information which may perhaps lead to a solution. . . . The greatest difficulty will be to overcome the distrust of the shareowners, who need money but do not wish to surrender their voting power. Naturally with the various proposals and offers that have been made to them, the word 'Stinnesization'[1] has been current for some time. I think I have convinced the gentlemen that participation will give them a corresponding influence on the management. . . . They have no idea of a serious policy. The artists come together once a week and try to work out the words for their drawings. I knew some contributors who could and would undertake the editing. It is not difficult to work up a big circle of readers and abroad for a national satirical paper perhaps as important as the English *Punch*. . . .

[1] Stinnes excelled in utilizing the inflation to acquire an interest, often a controlling interest, in all manner of concerns.

[1923]

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Blankenburg, 31.12.23

It is unpardonable that I have not written to you for many weeks, but I must allege the political position in Berlin and Munich as my excuse; I was actually more often in sleeping cars and hotels than at home and never found time to come near Weimar. As to what has been lost in political possibilities and ideals in this time, I prefer to be silent. It is hard on the younger generation to have fallen into the hands of such inferior leaders, simpletons, place-hunters and worse. After seeing this performance at close quarters, one is finally convinced that we stand in need of a terrible crisis, by which all that we have inherited from 1918 will be swept away, and everything points to this happening in the next few months. Recently I have written a political book which will appear in January, and I hope to complete a philosophical work of some size in the summer. I am here in the Harz for a week only to get a little rest. It seems to me to be the right occasion to bring out a good English edition [of Nietzsche]; there is much interest in Nietzsche over there, without there being any good translations. Should I perhaps make a proposal in the name of the Archive to my English publisher, with whom I have closed a very good contract?

Artur Dix to Spengler

1923

(Fragment) . . . Judging from intimations which I received yesterday from the President's closest entourage, the moment for the decision of this question seems to be close at hand; I should consider it, therefore, to be most expedient and timely, to give the international public at the present time a sympathetic picture of the banishee at Wieringen, to bring about a more friendly attitude towards his return home. As things are it would be useful if you agree to forward the requested contribution as soon as possible.

1924

Spengler to Gerhard von Janson

Munich, 10.1.24

I have finished the article for Russia. Herr Dr Walther promised me in the meantime the translation of my article translated into English and the approval of one of his English friends. . . . I naturally agree to your alteration of the sentence about petroleum. However there is a considerable risk that France by means of some holdings or other in the companies will control European petroleum supplies to a much greater extent than one generally supposes. . . .

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Munich, 18.2.24

Well: the Swiss trip went off *very* well. All five lectures (in eight days) were successful. I made a number of acquaintances; I am keeping a couple of articles; my publisher has annexed the rest. I would have liked to go to Lugano: cypresses thickly covered with snow, no stoves, frost on the windowpanes. Therefore I have postponed the Scandinavian—ugh—trip till the autumn, hope you will spend the Easter holidays here, in return for which I shall escape to the land of the oranges. On what day are you coming? Hitler case perpetually postponed. Next week I am going to give a political programme speech to the students in Wurzburg.

Now the house. House prices are falling slowly. The profiteers are doing badly, so there will be better buys in summer. I was strongly advised to wait for some months, then things will no longer be difficult. Also I am having an estimate made for a new house. At the moment that is always three times as expensive as a

ready-built house. Unless it is to be a ruin made out of swindling material, not under 30,000 for six rooms. Everything cheap is rubbish.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Munich, 25.2.24

Please send by postal packet handkerchiefs and some of the day shirts, which I could not bring with me last time, about three, or I shall be in difficulty until you bring some with you.

Snow and cold! I should like to go to Africa via Sicily.

The Hitler case starts tomorrow. There are military posts already in the Agnesstrasse, likewise in the whole railway quarter, to prevent any foolery.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Munich, after 25.2.24

A pity you can't come! But I have also put off my journey, chiefly because it is miserably cold down there. You must come without fail in April for eight to ten days, taking no notice of weddings, engagements, and similar minor matters. Get yourself a servant at last, so that you are not an eternal slave to housework. It does not matter about the expense. . . . I enclose a record of the case [Hitler case]. Ludendorff has unfortunately frustrated the arrangements made to prevent secret matters coming out in court. He imagines that he will get the command of the army if he puts the blame on it. I consider him no longer quite responsible for his actions. . . .

Engelbrecht von Kerkerink zu Borg to Spengler

Spring 1924

. . . His [Ludendorff's] escapades in the religious field [Ultramontism], etc., have been listened to with horror by the entire Catholic population. They say, as with one mouth: 'What are

we coming to if these people are going to govern us?' They overlook the fact that Ludendorff belongs to the 'German People's Party', and that this party is only an extreme group of the Right. It is said straight out: Ludendorff has unmasked the Right, the Right is anti-Catholic, the enemy is on the Right. . . . That the left wing [of the Centrum party], at the very moment when the ground was giving under its feet, should be put back firmly in the saddle, is history's *esprit d'escalier*.

I should be very grateful . . . if you would tell me something about the Munich Process. According to the reports I understand the Kahr-Lossow-Seisser wanted the well-known 'Small Directorate' in Berlin to be achieved by political pressure . . . and that on the other hand Hitler-Ludendorff wanted a Dictatorship Hitler-Ludendorff to be achieved by 'military' pressure, that is to say by an armed march on Berlin. Both sides parleyed with one another to bring the other side over; the parleying in the final stage was carried out with a revolver; Kahr-Lossow-Seisser withdrew from this degree of pressure by the 'Comedy Act' and therefore in the interests of the country, and not least in the interests of the whole Right movement, brought about the failure of a solution by force. Is this view correct?

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Munich, 5.3.24

I must earnestly ask for forgiveness for only answering your letter today. Apart from my journey to Switzerland I have had to give a lecture to the students at Wurzburg, and in addition the wretched Hitler case compels me to stay here and make every effort secretly to prevent the most important matters in connection with the national associations and the army from being dragged into the open in Germany and abroad, on which Ludendorff, out of revenge to be sure, seems quite determined. The consequences could be unpredictable and particularly supply France with a motive to start again with its cry for disarmament. . . .

[1924]

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 12.3.24

When can I have a talk with you? The banking experiments of Dr Schacht perplex me. In the end he is neither a creative personality nor a dictator, but a currency acrobat, who manages to be equally popular in Paris and London as in Berlin high financial circles (the opposite of Helfferich) and the party caucus round Stresemann.[1] In order to maintain 'his' currency, he will finally sacrifice the substance of industry and agriculture as well as our interests *vis-à-vis* France, and in this departmental ambition (or rather because of it) he will finally suffer shipwreck and leave behind him a deserted chaos. I believe that industry should interest itself in good time on this occasion in the currency question, as afterwards it will be squeezed to make good the damage. At this point I again regret that all my efforts to instil an interest in Press matters into industry have proved in vain. The Bourse and Agriculture are active against the pressure of taxation and the currency, not to mention other interests. On the other hand Ullstein and Mosse are investigating industry's capacity to bear burdens, and the event dominates the German and the foreign Press.

[1] Dr Koktanek says that Spengler later took a more favourable view of Stresemann, Schacht, and Seeckt, because he realized that he had not appreciated the motives for their guarded tactics during the years 1923–4. One may feel that Spengler's opposition to the Weimar Government—Germany's first experiment in democracy—was a blot on his political character. On the other hand it is easy to understand his attitude. Stresemann's Government were remiss in dealing with the inflation, and there seemed, at least to Spengler, to be an undesirable connection between them and the finance companies, who were the only section of the community which did not suffer. Spengler further believed that there was an understanding between them and international high finance which would be prejudicial to Germany.

According to K. D. Bracher, professor of political science at Bonn University, 'the democratic movement for a revision of the Versailles terms was never free from the agitation of the Radical Right, and was never able to obtain wide popular support for an objective and constructive policy. Stresemann's policy was tragically overshadowed by this dilemma, which placed it in a dubious light in the eyes of many of his contemporaries, and also of later critics. More than a symbolic importance lay in the coincidence of two important events in 1929—the death of Stresemann, and the beginning of the economic crisis.'

In the newspaper crisis of 1922–3, it would have been easy to build up a powerful organization, which might today exert a decisive influence on world opinion. The Micum[1] agreements are a punishment for this sin of neglect.

Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche to Spengler

Weimar, 13.3.24

I have seen all manner of extracts about your lectures in Switzerland, and read what an immense impression you have made there. Also I imagine from these various cuttings that there must now be an extraordinary market for your books and I do not believe that Nietzsche's works were sold to the same extent.

The Hitler case is enough to make one weep! I must say however that Kahr has said well: 'Today they are standing before a tribunal, opposite men who bear in their hearts strong patriotic feelings, and wish for the same things, but disagree about the method.' These words have somewhat consoled me, and I hope from my whole heart that none of the accused is punished, as they have all acted in a passionate patriotic effort, to do what is right for their country.

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Munich, 18.3.24

. . . A thought came to me today: the extensive volumes of letters are still not nearly so widely circulated as the last great letter-writer in the German language deserves. How would it be, my dear friend, if you put together a volume of Nietzsche life in letters, which contains nothing except his inner life, and direct personal confessions. There have been several attempts to do something of the sort about Goethe; the Insel Verlag has also put together volumes about Hebbel and Voltaire, which are naturally lacking in inward richness. In Germany we possess only two men whose letters express the whole of their lives without re-

[1] 'Micum': contracts between the German Mining Union and the inter-allied mission in control of factories and mines.

mainder, Goethe and Nietzsche. Could not an epic or a tragedy of their life be composed out of the great mass of correspondence? I would very willingly look through the volumes and make proposals, but the decision over every individual letter and the necessary remarks must be left to you. I do not wish to express anything in writing about the Hitler case. I have had far too much connection with both sides, not to have a better survey of the whole mass of egoism and stupidity than the public can have.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 23.3.24

. . . I consider it quite certain that with the election, which will produce a Reichstag completely incapable of ruling, we shall land in an internal crisis which will perhaps exceed in sharpness that of last autumn. Moreover, it appears to me absolutely certain that, in spite of the carefully kept secret, the idea of the Goldmissionbank, fathered by Herren Schacht, Litwin, Georg Bernhard, Ottmar Strauss, in closest conjunction with French finance and certain Berlin circles, will more and more form part of the Reparations problem,[1] that German big industry will repre-

[1] The question of reparations, which Churchill, in evident agreement with Keynes, described as a sad story of complicated idiocy, was tied up with the problem of inter-allied war debts. The USA. had lent 10 milliard, and Britain 8 milliard dollars. France owed Britain and the USA 5 milliards, lesser States owed France 2½ milliards. England and France proposed the cancellation of inter-allied liabilities; the USA, chiefly concerned, refused. In 1921 Bonar Law proposed a 50 per cent cut in reparation claims, and a four-year moratorium, but Poincaré had taken the place of Briand, and France occupied the Ruhr until 1924.

The Dawes scheme in 1924 was described as a circulatory movement of American money. Germany paid the allies from American loans, and the allies paid America.

H. W. Gatke (page 339 of *Propylaeen der Weltgeschichte*) writes: 'The influence which the USA obtained over [European] economy was a new feature of the 'twenties. Not only was the Reparations question closely connected with that of the allied debts to the USA, but the economic recovery of Europe depended on American credits. Unfortunately this took the form not of long-term loans by the Government, but chiefly of short-term private loans. The USA Government, in great contrast to its attitude after the Second World War, did not seem at that time to be conscious of the responsibility which had fallen upon her suddenly as the leading creditor power. This showed itself not only in her loans, but in

sent a pledge on the one hand for the satisfaction of reparation claims, and on the other for the paper money circulation. The remaining property rights in the works have been reduced very nearly to the nil point, which Herr Schacht indicated some months ago when he spoke of a ridiculous wish to hold on to the substance. Agriculture has suddenly become a danger to the parties because the rural voter has been hit severely by the latest taxation policy. Thus there will be a step backwards, certainly at the expense of industry, whose political power, neither in the Press, nor among the masses, nor in the Government, is such that no one need fear it in any way. The Press policy of Georg Bernhard and others, which has never been opposed, in or outside Germany, on the part of industry, has been leading up to this for a long time. As you know well, Messrs Stresemann, Hamm, Luther, etc., but also Schacht are moving in the same direction. The final result will be that all the arrangements will be made in Paris behind closed doors, that the Stresemann Press will prepare a suitable atmosphere for their publication, and throughout Germany there will be no serious opposition, because the victims of the process have prepared no suitable basis for operations.

Spengler to Guggenheim-Zollikofer

Munich, 24.3.24

You will have read that France remained for a week on the point of making an end of parliamentary government, and going over to a Poincaré dictatorship. And that is the classical land of democracy! They certainly argued over its expediency at the moment, or opposed the idea because they belong to the opposite party, but nobody raised his voice to protect the so-called democratic ideals.

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her trade policy. Instead of making it easier for her debtors to pay off their liabilities, in the only possible way, by an export surplus, the USA by the Fordney McCumber Act of 1922 introduced a sharp tariff rise, which soon found an echo in the tariff legislation of the European States. Only Britain hesitated to enter into a general tariff war, and did not start an intensive protection policy until 1922.'

In 1932 Reparations came to an end with a promise of a final payment of 3 milliards of goldmarks. The USA at this time refused to remit her allies' debts and complained sadly that only little Finland had paid up what she owed.

As the protection of the franc is simply a manoeuvre of the ruling group—at the same time a parody of the Sovereignty of the People, whose opinion is used like a lifeless object—the protective effects will wear off long before the election, so that with the next fall [of the franc], under the circumstances the election can be postponed *ad infinitum*. . . . I often envy you over there, because in Switzerland you only know real political crises from hearsay, and therefore a sound social decency can be preserved, which in the great countries has become mythical.

Spengler to Ernst Junger

Munich, 11.4.24

Herr Seldte the founder of the Stahlhelm had called my attention some time ago to your book which you have kindly sent me. It occurred when we were discussing how one could arouse again the great events and hopes of the war in a narrative form, and your book was mentioned as an example. . . .

Edouard Meyer to Spengler

Berlin-Lichterfelde, 17.4.24

As regards the pontifices I have long been of opinion that the title must be understood quite literally, and that the bridge which they had to construct was the *pons sublicius*. Just because this was of great importance for Rome's safety, and its proper reconstruction, if it was destroyed in war or washed away by the stream, demanded considerable knowledge, which only those representatives of science and tradition, the priests, possessed. Your allusion to the voting bridges seems to be improbable, as they only appeared with the *comitia centuriata*, while the name pontifex is clearly much older.

Graf Schwerin to Spengler

Bohrau bei Oels, 25.4.24

I am told H.R.H. the Crown Prince has asked you to Oels. It would give me great pleasure if on the occasion of your visit

you would stay a few days here in Bohrau to recover from your strenuous work.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

April 1924

I am sending you the proofs of the first brochure. The other will be ready next week. These are my plans: I am staying here till April 26th, on that day my fat sister will instal herself here to enjoy a few days gormandizing in the Munich spring (three days ago snow a foot deep, yesterday July heat with a severe storm, today snow); in the meantime I am giving a lecture in Hamburg and hope to find you on May 6th in Blankenburg, when I shall start on a period of prolific idleness. Do you agree?

With 50 M. and best wishes for Easter.

O.

Alfred Hugenberg to Spengler

Rohbraken bei Rintels a.d. Weser, 2.5.24

This morning coming back from yesterday's electoral assembly I read an extract from your new work—the 'Swamp' chapter in the *Westfalischen Landeszeitung*. It interested me extraordinarily to get to know your productions and your views, which correspond in many respects to my own, especially in a whole series of particular questions, such as the rising generation, the restriction of parliamentary debates, the repression of parliamentary disorder, the redistribution of the elected members by deputies appointed in another manner, etc. I should be very much interested after the appearance of your book to get to know all your views, and in connection with them to discuss these questions thoroughly with you—far from one's daily work, but on a fine summer's day, wandering about with Nature. Perhaps in the course of the spring or the summer you will be passing by in my neighbourhood, so that we could have some quiet hours together—or perhaps a stay in Kreuth, which I always have my eye on in the summer.

PS. In the meantime I have read in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* your further news about Right politicians, which to me do not appear to be quite justified regarding people like Helfferich. Stinnes also was actually a Right politician, if he is to be judged as a politician at all.

Albert August von Lecoq to Spengler

Berlin Dahlem, 13.5.24

I think with particular pleasure of the arrangements I had the honour to carry out for you in connection with the Turfan collection. I am delighted to remember your remarks about the value of our method of working compared with the more ephemeral efforts of Herr O. Kümmel and of his *alter ego* Herr W. Cohn.

I am approaching you now with the earnest request that you will take the Asiatic departments of the Museum for Ethnology under your protection. I have reached the age limit and am going on pension in 1925. After my departure the Ministry intends to allow Dr Cohn and Dr Kümmel to select from our collections of Buddhist Art what appears to *them* to be of artistic value. Gandhara and Turfan count for them as being of no artistic value, actually offensive. If these completely out-of-date aesthetes obtain a right of disposal over the objects to obtain which I have risked my life and health, fears must be entertained that a lot of things will be sold which do not please them, and for the damage done by acquiring articles more in accordance with their limited horizon. I know that you are able to exert a great influence, and have therefore ventured to bring these matters to your notice.

I am writing, to a certain extent, *sub specie aeternitatis*.

Paul Struever to Spengler

Munich, 25.3.24

Very many thanks for sending me, through your publisher, *The Political Duties of German Youth*. I believe that an important step will have been taken for the salvation of Germany, when your thoughts reach the farthest circles of our country and build

a road to reform; perhaps we shall yet find in you the political leader whom we need so urgently (you must already to a great extent rate as the intellectual leader). Among your audience in the Hamburg Oversee Club were my parents, who have written me interesting details about your lecture there.[1] I was in Hamburg

[1] This lecture, subsequently published, was entitled 'New forms of World Politics'. Spengler regrets that it was the French, and not the British, who came to the conclusion that they alone were responsible for winning World War I. The French were rescued by their allies, but in a year's time had quite forgotten this.

The British, says Spengler, would have had ideas for reorganizing the world, also they would have tried to reconcile their enemies, as they did after the Boer War. The French could not, or would not do this. The *French always look backwards*,'Napoleon III looked back to Napoleon I—a hankering after military glory, a Cyrano, behind whom is hidden a Tartarin; *revanche* is a backward looking idea.' British diplomacy since the war had been weak, whereas the French had learnt much in the Petersburg school.

A French general had said that their military strength, including both sides of the Mediterranean, amounted to 100 million men, but Spengler saw grave danger ahead in Africa—increasing numbers of natives will receive military training. Nationalism will be evoked by this French military policy, pursued regardless of its consequences. Powerful propaganda will come from the negroes of the USA via Liberia with the cry 'Africa for the Africans'. Islam will also promote effective propaganda, and will convert masses of negroes south of the Equator. (The German colonial authorities were always anxious, since the time of the Mahdi, regarding the advance of Islam southwards from the Sudan, and established belts of missionaries and of pig-breeding natives in the north of German East Africa. Spengler had much to say on the subject of the command of the sea.)

In the nineteenth century Britain, holding Malta, Aden, Singapore, Hongkong, controlled Africa and Asia. A navy is really too precious a possession to risk in a sea battle against a strong opponent. The defeat of Spain at sea in 1898, and of the Russian Navy by the Japanese in the Straits of Tsuchima was a foregone conclusion—the defeat of an utterly antiquated navy by one which was up to date.

Circumstances were changing to the disadvantage of Great Britain in that the land masses were becoming much more powerful *vis-à-vis* sea power. Various factors were responsible for this change—air power, interior communications, India's demand for independence, Russia's introduction of Bolshevism into China, Herzog having replaced Smuts, etc.

As regards Russia, Spengler held that the Bolshevist idea—an alliance of the proletariats of the West under the leadership of Russia—died for all practical purposes with Lenin. 'In the vast area between the Vistula and the boundaries of China and India over which historical events and cultures have passed like shadows since the days of Genghis Khan', Spengler thought that a Caesar would arise, like Enver Pasha, with the cry 'Asia for the Asiatics'. This sounds to us like a fairy tale, but similar things had happened more than once in history, and the collapse of Czarism in such an appalling manner, if it had been prophesied three years before, would have been regarded by the world as the dream of a madman.

myself last week, and there was much talk about you. I do not know if you have read in the papers that I am leaving Munich for ever to join the Magdeburg Municipal Theatre, which has engaged me as Choir Director and Conductor of the Orchestra. I will leave no stone unturned to get 'Diana's Wedding' performed at last. (Spengler had written the libretto.)

Ernst Paraquin to Spengler

Munich, 23.5.24

... I have a lively remembrance of our evening conversation about politics, after which you gave me such a vivid picture of Germany today. Very soon after this the Hitler 'putsch' put the crown on the year-long political carnival on the banks of the Isar. What damage was done to goodwill, to sanctified beliefs, to honourable enthusiasms, by the narrow-mindedness and inadequacy of individuals! I almost lost any pleasure in, and interest in politics.

The superficial scribbling of our daily Press and a short-lived experience, which I had during the revolution (of some political circles), filled me with disgust! The story of politics is a dirty story! I avow openly that the original, absolutely different form which you give to the vast chaos of political ideas and tendencies, points out the only way one can apprehend politics and lift it again above the level of the street and the party Press and, leaving behind the empty dullness and mental confusion, establish aims which are worthy of the sweat of the noble-minded. I have, as a soldier, been through the General Staff College which you rightly rate so high, in peace and war I have had the opportunity to develop qualities of military leadership, but I would never be qualified for political leadership. On the other hand, I am ready with joy to serve under your leadership. Realize from this the deep effect of your words, which to my delight I have observed here and there among independent thinkers. I have been six weeks in Sicily. The west stops there, it is inhabited by Fellachin, to whom Mussolini is an incredible uncanny phenomenon. In Monreale, in the magic fairy cave, glistening with gold, of the Cappella Palatina, I was conscious of gratitude for the immeasurable

enrichment which you have given to our mental life. Perhaps I shall be able to report to you again by word of mouth.

With repeated thanks,

Yours sincerely,
Lt.-Col. Ernst Paraquin.

Alban Schachleiter to Spengler

Munich, 31.5.24

Many thanks for sending me your speech: *The Political Duties of German Youth*, and for your kind dedication. I would thank you for the courage with which you have addressed these warnings, worthy of being taken to heart, to German Youth. God grant that this seed falls on fertile ground and brings forth the desired fruit. What calamities in the German Fatherland! One could weep aloud at this state of affairs. Have we not been brought low enough? Our people was never so leaderless as it is today. Tirpitz is hardly the right man. Ludendorff has flung away absolutely the support of the German Catholics. Helfferich dead! In addition to that the political confusion here in Bavaria! May God help us! May He grant us the strength to continue to work for our poor Fatherland.

Edouard Meyer to Spengler

Berlin-Lichterfelde, 7.6.24

. . . I have read your two pamphlets with lively interest and warm agreement. You express yourself very optimistically. I would do the same in public, whatever my inward misgivings. For in practice the ideal programme which you hold up before the young naturally can only be carried out in a most piecemeal fashion, in spite of all the enthusiasm, perhaps precisely for that reason. Our people is quite unadapted for a sober realistic perception, and party strife with its unending fragmentation is so much in our blood, that we cannot escape from it. The last few days have shown this again in a particularly drastic and shameing manner. For all that the parliamentary system continually prostitutes itself and makes itself ridiculous before the eyes of the whole

world, I am afraid that a people, which has once succumbed to it, never escapes. . . .

But I did not want to write about this, but about quite different matters. You know about the position of the Turfan fund. . . . A chief point is the unfortunate organization of the Ethnological Museum with all its appurtenances and the consequent rivalries. This has got worse through a tendency, which asserts itself strongly and regardlessly, to separate the Asiatic art from its connection with the cultures out of which it sprang, and to assemble it in an Art Museum under the management of aesthetic dilettantes, who know nothing of the language, religion, and culture of the peoples in question; in other words to treat them as antique art memorials were treated in earlier days. That we must struggle against this tendency is clear; the model we ought to follow should rather be the form which the Egyptian museum has taken, and which we hope to obtain for the Middle East. . . . The essential point is that the fund and its very great importance, which is as good as unknown outside the narrow circle of specialists, should be made known to wider circles, and that general interest should be awakened. Very rightly you have pointed out emphatically the necessity of such treatment. With clever treatment the same effect might be achieved, which has been successful for Egypt, and brought flocks of visitors to the newly opened Amarna room.

The question is now, who can arrange a similar comprehensive exhibition with a well chosen but, on the ground of expense, not too extensive selection of illustrations from all the chief areas. The thought has occurred to me, whether you would not be willing to undertake such an exhibition. This proposal has been most enthusiastically received. . . . You possess the required general preliminary knowledge and a wide conception of universal history, which makes it possible to fit the details into a general scheme, and thereby to put them in the right light. . . . A special advantage is that you are not tied down like the experts in their special fields, and therefore you can freely express views and indicate important tendencies, which they would not have to do unless they could confirm exactly every word and every statement. . . .

Alfred Doren to Spengler

Cottbus, 11.6.24

. . . You speak as Mentor Germaniae, and you are entitled to do so, if anybody is. Above all you are speaking to Youth, which trusts you, and you lay hold of it with a strong hand in order to set it on the right path. . . . I can follow you a good part of the way, rejoice in your firm manliness, your power of resistance to all illusions, catchwords, and propaganda; but, as you know, I cannot for the most part, subscribe to your judgments. Even if we are stuck in a swamp, which naturally I do not deny, yet for me it is in no wise hopeless and dirty, as you represent it. I do not see everywhere in party life only mire, poison, confusion, and corruption; I see honourable intentions, unselfish loyalty, a readiness to make sacrifices, private integrity, etc., not only in Conservative circles, but also on the other side—and I believe that of all the men who have come to the front since the collapse, Rathenau [murdered 1922—Tr.] was the only one who would have been able to build a raft, as a first refuge for the nation struggling for its existence in the whirlpools of the period, which it could cling to, and save itself, until it landed finally on better shores. Is the comparison of the popular movement of today with the *Jeunesse dorée*[1] of the eighteenth century not one of those vague analogies against which you once said, very rightly, that one ought to beware? I, also, would be glad if an organic and organizing power could replace the mechanical element in parliamentary government, a form without which the nation at the present time think they cannot live, but I see the time when that will happen as still a very long time off, and the state of affairs in Italy, about

[1] For the *Jeunesse dorée*, to whom Spengler compared the Nazis, see Carlyle's *French Revolution*, vol. III, p. 375. Their behaviour led to a recrudescence of Jacobinism, which a certain 'young Artillery officer' quelled with 'a whiff of grape-shot'.

'Sansculottism growled in its throat. Ci-devants return dancing, the Thermidor effulgence of re-civilization, and balls in flesh-coloured drawers; Greek tunics and sandals, hosts of Muscadins [fops] parading with their clubs loaded with lead.'

The *Jeunesse dorée* had no serious ideas whatsoever—'it was sufficient that Jacobin backs should feel their sticks'.

In this connection Spengler objected to the posting of notices by the Nazis, 'Juden hinaus'—'In England every foreigner is recognized as an Englishman, so long as he uses his talents, means, and connections for the good of England.'

which I learnt more on an Easter holiday, in spite of Mussolini's Caesar-like gestures does not contradict this view. But I would be ready and willing to dispense with all parliamentary controls and supports, if you, who preach Germany's wealth, not only of organizing but also of statesmanlike talents, could name just *one* man, into whose hands the nation could with confidence place the decision over its fate, and whose voice would produce the echo which we need abroad with those who today determine our destiny. You must agree with me that Herr v. Tirpitz, held in readiness for this purpose, is not the right man. The 'State as an employment bureau for party members' is certainly not a product of the Revolution, it is only that other parties besides those which existed in William's Germany have come to the manger, and as a result of long privation have developed a specially powerful appetite.

What you say about the education of a high-grade official aristocracy,[1] about our pedogogic aims, about law reforms and

[1] Professor Doren recognized Spengler's right as an ex-gymnasium teacher to speak on the subject of education.

'In the centre I would put Latin, still today. Germany owes more than she realizes to the methodical teaching of Latin in the Gymnasium during the previous century. The habit of daily thought throughout many years in the most disciplined language that exists is an acquired art of mental activity . . . it is irreplaceable, not even by the quite mechanical mental process in mathematics. (Spengler was a considerable mathematician.)

'Religious instruction should be rigorous, emphatic, or none at all. An institution which is permeated by the spirit of strict piety, of which there used to be many—Yes, but young people should not be educated by half-measures—moral teaching free from dogma, the inculcation of a *Weltanschaung* (which became a Nazi cant word) or whatever the cheap substitute for religion is called.'

Regarding the school leaving examination, the abitur, Spengler wrote: 'In Germany there are a quantity of excellent youths of the best stock, who are quite incapable of methodical school work—they are thus excluded from the higher professions. The existing system excludes self-teachers, and the large quantity of late developers, who are limited and shy at 15, and suddenly wake up at 25. Many were excluded because their parents wanted their earnings. If we are going to be democratic, let it be here. The test should be controlled by the State, open to those in offices and works, and irrespective of *age*, social position, sex, and previous education.'

Spengler also wanted some 'German Etons'.

Neubau des Deutschen Reiches 3 Erziehung oder Bildung, published by Sp. in Spring 1924.

economics, about questions of dwelling-houses and taxation, is all worthy of the greatest respect, and I hope that it will meet with this respect among those with whom it deals.

Erich Kuttner to Spengler

Berlin, 12.6.24

I have read with interest your book *Reconstruction of the German Reich*. In the first few pages you allude to certain events, the genuineness of which I should like to investigate, but which, in the form in which they are presented do not admit historical control.

On page 9 occurs:
(1) 'The best-known heroes of this farce got drunk in Weimar on the day that the [treaty of] Versailles was signed.' I should be glad if you would give me the names of the gentlemen who got drunk in Weimar on the night of the signing in Versailles.

Similarly:
(2) '. . . that a short time after this leaders of the Proletariat entrusted with high offices got drunk with naked female dancers in the villa of a Berlin profiteer, while labour deputations waited in front of the door.'

I ask for information as to the identity of these gentlemen, who is the profiteer in question, where the villa is, and finally the date of the occurrence.

I should be particularly grateful for a reply to my questions. At the same time I presume that as a historian of repute you will indicate to me only such sources as comply with a serious historical inquiry. I think you will agree with me that something of this kind appearing in a local paper or propaganda sheet does not constitute proof of such allegations. I would point out that I attach great importance to your reply, and that if you do not reply to my questions, I must draw the conclusion that you are not able to give me a positive answer.

With particular respect,
Erich Kuttner,
Member of the Provincial Assembly.

Spengler to Erich Kuttner

After 25.6.24

In reply to your letter of June 25th, which I found here on my return from a journey, I wish to remark as follows. It is my practice in my political writings to attack conditions and systems, not more or less unimportant persons. Accordingly I have selected cases from my material which throw light on conditions, *without* regard to personalities.

Please leave me to judge the reliability of my material, also the decision whether I consider the grounds exist for mentioning the names in these cases and in others known to me. Further I reject the attempt to force from me the answer you require, on the ground that not to answer your questions is equivalent to a declaration that it is impossible to answer them.

Spengler to Manfred Schroter

Munich, 26.7.24

At the moment of departure (to Berlin unfortunately, not to the South).

I thank you for the little book, which I can read on the journey. When is the great book about German thought from the Romantic period up to Nietzsche-Bachofen-Schuler going to appear?

From Martin Olpe to Spengler

Meran-Obermann, 5.8.24

In No. 3 of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, there is a copy of a letter stated to be from the Socialist Erich Kuttner and your reply to this letter. The *Berliner Tageblatt* again cannot forgo this opportunity to make most unpleasant, in fact severely insulting, comments on you and your excellent work. I therefore consider it my duty to supply you with dates and names which have impressed themselves upon me through personal experience. It is a fact that on the day on which the Peace Treaty was signed in Versailles, a procession of hopelessly drunken proletarians went bawling round the streets; I have seen this with my own eyes on

the days in question in Essen/Ruhr. It was clearly established from members of the crowd that assembled, that these people had served as members of the Soldiers' Council. Finally I know that the Prussian Minister-President Herr Braun owns a true palace in Halldern near Reichenhall, which he bought for a huge sum in spring 1919, so short a time after the 'glorious Revolution'—I allude to Sofienhof. . . .

A. Colsman to Spengler

Friedrichtefen a.b., 27.8.24

Commercial Councillor Dr Paul Reusch requests me to offer you the opportunity of taking part in a trial of our airship. I agree with pleasure to this proposal. Trial trips, taking only a short time, will take place this week and next. A longer trip over Germany, perhaps including the Baltic, is planned for the second half of next week. It is not possible to give you exact time-tables for the journeys. I believe that participation in the longer trip would give you much pleasure, and I should be delighted if you took part in it.

Georg Davidsohn to Spengler

Berlin, 12.8.24

I have two justifications for writing to you. (1) I am studying your work *The Decline of the West*. (2) I was in the same awkward situation as you are now, during the occurrences in Weimar and elsewhere in 1919 and onwards. I was a member of the SPD. and from 1912–20 of the Reichstag, fought the Scheidemann-Sklarz economy, met with no understanding and no help, was persecuted by means of lawsuits, etc., fought my way through, replied to the gentry, as the occasion required in the papers—the number was small—which put space at my disposal; finally, however, German amiability, indifference, forgetfulness, let grass grow over the affair.

Only last week I read of your difference with one of the SPD

bullies: Herr Erich Kuttner, to whom I have caused not inconsiderable damage by exposing the story of the killing of a workman named Eichhorn. I could not let this opportunity go by without joining in. I wrote a comment ('Kuttner on the high horse', copy enclosed).

As you will see from the enclosed copy, I employ tactics the exact opposite of yours, because in such cases, the little that I know, I state right out. That this method is preferable to yours I observe from the [evening edition] of *Vorwärts* of the 9th of this month. There under the title 'The Decline of a polemical treatise' (meant to be a joke!) with the sub-title 'Spengler and the Truth', it is maintained that you have now gone over to employing 'unclean and mendacious weapons' in the political fight, you have *folded up* before Kuttner. You were not able to prove your statements, because they were obvious lies, even your defender Theodor Schulze in the *Dresdene Neueste Nachrichten* had to sacrifice many of your statements, in order to conceal the fact that you had stepped down unmasked into the arena of streetboys, had sullied learning, etc. . . . The point that interests me is the effect or non-effect upon public opinion, and in this connection I venture to remark as follows: you will certainly not guide public opinion, including that of your own immediate group, in the direction you desire for the furtherance of Herculean Augean stable work, so long as you do not make up your mind to give up your system of insinuations in favour of open factual revelations. The average German of all persuasions is so constituted that in disputes of this kind he looks to the *concrete.* So long as you fight against Kuttner and his friends with unsubstantiated statements—'the chief coalition leaders . . . got hopelessly drunk in Weimar—holders of high offices drank heavily and amused themselves with naked? dancers in a profiteer's villa in Berlin—Socialist leaders bought country seats', etc., you won't get far, and you will certainly 'draw the shorter straw'. What you must do is to take a feather brush, and edit the material without defamation giving the names.

Thus: Erzbergher . . . Fehrenbach . . . Wels . . . Hirsch . . . Wolff . . . Ebert . . . etc.

Spengler to Martin Blank

Munich, 1.9.24

. . . As regards the Russian journey, naturally I wish to examine Russian architecture and the prehistoric finds in the museums of the big towns—that is also one of the actual reasons—and I should like very much to make the acquaintance of the leading professors in Petersburg and Moscow. I think that this reason is sufficiently important, as I am now engaged on a book[1] which is based on these subjects.

Francesco Nitti to Spengler

Zürich, 19.9.24

Dear Doctor,

I thank you for your courteous letter of the 15th inst. and hope to see you before you go to America. I shall be very glad to talk to you about the situation in Europe, and to say many things which it is not possible to say now about the books.

The system of balance depends now above all on two things. The first is the behaviour of America, the second is the position of Italy. So long as Fascism lasts in Italy, Italian policy will be in the French continental sphere, and that not only because of the origins of Fascism but perhaps of its permanent bonds.

England desires the reconstruction of Germany and the end of the policy of violence; and France, in order not to be isolated in its continental sphere together with Belgium and the Little Entente, has need of Italy. Since the time when I left the government, Italian policy has not favoured reconstruction. Thus in the question of Upper Silesia England remained isolated and Italy was on the side of the France of Poincaré. On the question of the Ruhr, England was abandoned by Italy because she acted against her interests. Fascism will never follow a policy far from that of France. In view of that I shall be very pleased to discuss what you can do in America for the work of reconstruction. If you could possibly assist the candidature of Senator Lafollette it would be of

[1] *Urfragen.*

great advantage to the peace of Europe. He has given evidence of such ideas since 1919, and his return would be a real stroke of fortune. It is not very probable, but it is possible, above all if the American working class masses, since Gompers joined it, enter the movement. I shall be very much pleased to discuss all this with you and also the actual position of democracy in Europe....

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Munich, 30.9.24

After twenty years the verdict on Nietzsche and the interpretation of his life is still in the same stage where he was placed by contemporary criticism in the 'nineties. Let us hope that his eightieth anniversary will carry the general discernment a stage further on....

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

September 1924

Have pity on poor me. Had an invitation to a great Zeppelin trip, for three weeks it was perpetually postponed, had to make a speech on the 19th in Dusseldorf, rushed from there to Berlin, from there to Leipzig, then to Munich, always sleeping cars, arrived, flight put off, waited, flight took place before announcement, Zeppelin flew off in front of my nose, not to be called back, won't go on any more flights. Must speak on October 15th in Weimar, will be with you on 16th, you must send me letters.

Have got a mortgage, can buy house, have advertised, visit the office for me, have a couple of prospects; from then on you can always live to and fro between B[lankenburg] and Munich. Must stop, today meeting in the Deutsche Museum 2–4, October Oriental Congress, must work hard. There is an English officer's recipe for remaining slim: every day an hour before rising quickly drink off a glass of hot water.

Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche to Spengler

Weimar, 6.11.24

I think again and again with intense pleasure and the warmest gratitude of your wonderful speech [Nietzsche and his century], which gave me so many ideas and opened up new points of view. It is a great pleasure for me to read it in print, and many people are as eager as I am to hear again so much that was new and splendid, and you can be sure that there was no lack of warmth of feeling. I believe the people wanted to hear something dithyrambic, but my heart already feels so dithyrambic that the speech exactly as it was, was of the greatest value to me.

Spengler to Gerhard von Janson

Munich, 8.12.24

I have announced myself to E[dmund] S[tinnes] for the 21st or 22nd. . . .

In the Baltic events have already proved me right. I hear from there that they are urgently searching for allies. Let us hope that in Sweden they are a little less naïve in their ideas about the safety of their country. The elections are a surprise.[1] I had reckoned before on eighty German Nationalists and forty Democrats.

So then à la England.

Walter Andrae[2] to Spengler

10.12.24

. . . I am pleased with your optimism that in a few years' time we shall arrive at a state of complete knowledge in our department, although I see thick veils flowing on all sides. . . . Actually I have still got a feeling that with regard to pre-history we are still stuck in the preliminary stage. I would have a greater feeling of certainty, if searches could be carried out at a dozen more places,

[1] The extreme Right and the extreme Left both lost seats but no party had a sufficient majority to carry out a definite policy.

[2] W. Andrae, born 1875, Assyriologist, Professor of Oriental Archaeology, Berlin.

on at least the same scale as mine, on which I do not pride myself unduly.

If the entire local connection is not cleared up, and this very seldom happens, one is far too much groping in the dark on the strength of a few potsherds, or something of the sort. It is possible that I am looking too narrowly at the remains of material culture and neglecting traces of the purely spiritual.

Alfred Jeremias to Spengler

Leipzig, 27.12.24

Herr Albers was kind enough to inform me that he would suggest to you that you should visit me on the occasion of your next visit to the North. The matter was raised by my telling him that I have announced a lecture in the winter term on 'Spengler's Magian Culture and the Ancient East'.

If a night in Leipzig suits your plans, I beg you not to despise the prophet's chamber in the house of Jeremias. I have a large parsonage.

Your two volumes are ringing in my ears. . . . What we call ancient oriental 'spiritual' culture (spiritual culture not in the Hegelian sense, but simply as opposed to material culture) is in any case very much more than a preliminary stage to the 'Arabian culture' in the sense of your discovery. I am most anxious that you should see my *Handbook of Ancient Oriental Spiritual Culture.* I am in course of revising the book in connection with E. F. Weidner, the brilliant young Assyriologist, who has provided me with the material of the last ten years. . . .

The disagreement between us (I hope only temporary) in the valuation of the 'Babylonian introductory stage'[1] is, in my opinion,

[1] A note on page 189, vol. II of *The Decline*, Atkinson's translation, runs 'It is to be noted that the home of the Babylonian Culture, the ancient Sinear, plays no part of any importance in the coming events. Only the region north of Babylon, not to the south, comes into question as regards the Arabian Culture.' By 'coming events' Spengler means what he calls the 'Magian waking-consciousness that arose and built itself a metaphysic of last things, based already upon the prime-symbol of the coming Culture, the Cavern'.

See also Jeremias' letter of 14.7.25.

decisive in the question of regarding Christianity as the 'pleroma' of the Arabian culture. . . .

Max Warburg to Spengler

27.12.24

I have employed my holidays in reading your pamphlet: *The relation between Economics and Taxation Policy since 1750.* The ground principle of collecting the tax as much as possible where the profit is made, is certainly correct. It is very hard to arrive at international agreements. The well-to-do would have the greatest interest in such international agreements, for they greatly overrate the possibility of avoiding the taxation of mobile capital. Owing to the method in which taxes are collected now, mobile capital is liable to be taxed twice over; it is therefore necessary to take steps against this double taxation if one wishes to establish a moral and just taxation. . . .

1925

Spengler to Rudolf Schlubach

Munich, 9.1.25

Unfortunately your October letter went astray, otherwise it might have been possible for me on my return journey via Reval and Riga to come to you for a day, especially as I am anxious to discuss certain matters. I take a definitely more pessimistic view of affairs, and already in Berlin the working of the Dawes plan[1]

[1] The Dawes plan was not altogether popular—the post and railway finance was put under American control—but the temporary settlement of the Reparations question, which brought American loans to Germany, together with the stabilization of the mark, brought back prosperity. It will be noticed that from 1925 to 1929 Spengler took much less active interest in politics, the apparent reason being that this was a period of revival and hope in Germany, and throughout western Europe. France under Poincaré kept a government for three years. Britain saved the country from the demoralization of inflation by going back to the gold standard, and maintaining the value of the pound, which put her at a disadvantage in competing with Germany, while the General Strike in 1926 was also a handicap.

Spengler was opposed to Stresemann, whom he suspected, through his association with the firm of Wolff, of profiteering by speculating during the inflation, but Stresemann's association with Austen Chamberlain and Briand led to the signing of the Locarno pact, under which Britain and Italy guaranteed Germany's western frontier; the Rhineland was to remain demilitarized and forceful alteration of the German-Polish boundary was prohibited (the Nationalist members of the German cabinet accordingly resigned).

France withdrew from the Rhine and Luxembourg. In 1926 Germany became a member of the League of Nations, and in the same year was signed the Kellog pact which 'outlawed war'.

This bright period came to an end on October 24, 1929, when the New York stock exchange collapsed, and the loans to Germany ceased. There were great losses on the French stock exchange, owing to the collapse of the Oustric concerns—Oustric being a speculator who had made a fortune in the inflation; in Britain there was the Hatry affair. Stresemann died on October 3rd.

The slump and unemployment in Germany, all the worse for following a period of hope, revived Spengler's political enthusiasm, but, in the same way as he had regarded the Weimar Government as a tool of international finance, as

in the form of ridiculous tax regulations and internal political friction is regarded as very unfavourable to industry. The plans of the Ministry of Finance—I know something about them—will, when they are made known, cause dismay in leading business circles, and, I fear, will soon strangle the impulses towards new enterprises. I can say very little in a letter. Just before Christmas I had an opportunity to discuss the matter with Cuno, whom I found very dubious on the subject. The good news of the colonial

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time went on he was no more favourably impressed by the Nazi movement, which he looked upon as ideological and under the control of bad elements.

Spengler's political ideas, expressed in his *Politische Schriften*, were consistent, if unattainable. His recipe was 'Prussian Socialism'—government by a devoted civil service, in fact the imperial system, slightly idealized. 'If Marx had understood the meaning of work in the Prussian sense of the word, activity for its own sake, or service for all and not for oneself, his manifesto would never have been written. For Marx, work is a commodity and not a duty. Marxism is an ideology-literature—but the as yet not fully understood Prussian Socialism is a reality of the highest order. Marx wished to upset the English notion that private property should be almighty, but he could only formulate a denial-expropriation of the exploiters, robbing the robbers. (Spengler believed in the guidance of industry by the State, but not in State ownership of industry.) There is a Prussian element in this anti-English principle, a respect for property in a German sense; the power inherent in property should pass to the community, it is not a question of nominal ownership but of administrative technique, but to buy up businesses for the sake of a catchword, and instead of the initiative and responsibility of the owner, to hand them over to an administration which must eventually lose all power of supervision—this is the ruin of socialism. Socialism means the gradual conversion of the worker into an official, of the employer into a responsible executive of the State with wide powers, and of property into a sort of inherited loan.'

Spengler considered that the taxation introduced by Lloyd George in 1908, and the death duties, almost ruined the governing class in England. 'Thereby the heart of an already endangered empire is not, in Socialist language, freed from its exploiters and Junkers, but the poorer for the loss of a class whose inherited qualities have secured success for many generations in world politics.'

In imperial Germany there was a class which had sufficient private income to be able to work in the civil service for a small salary. In Spengler's words: 'Germany possesses like other countries a highly bred class, which for many generations through education and culture has acquired something which cannot be described materially—a tradition of service, of understanding, and purpose, on which the whole spiritual, social, political, and finally the commercial standing of the nation depends. This class can only continue to exist on the condition that it obtains a sufficient share of the national income to carry on its education and traditions, and to provide for the future.'—Tr.

question is an occasion for me to congratulate you, as much of it is your work, nevertheless it seems to me possible that the whole matter, in some way or other, will be called into question. A sufficient reason for that is the present formation of a weak cabinet of the left-centre, for which eager preparations have been made in Berlin during the last 24 hours. . . .

Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche to Spengler

12.1.25

It is truly amusing, dear friend, that so many people who want something out of you apply to me to speak on their behalf, which I will willingly do in affairs which I think will not be unpleasant for you. Now it is the excellent Herr von Hake, who has written a book about the atrocities in the Rhine and Ruhr areas accompanied by exact official documents, which, from what I hear, must be very shocking, because it brings out the terrible reality so convincingly. At least Major Oehler said: 'Aunt, you must not read it, it would shock you so horribly,' so I have only had some of it repeated to me.

Herr Hake has now begged me to ask you, dear friend, to write some introductory words.

Now comes my second request. Yesterday the publisher Dr Klemm was here and again expressed much pleasure in the idea that your splendid lecture should be broadcast as an introduction to your Nietzsche book.[1] But he would very much like to publish this lecture as a special pamphlet or as a small book, whichever you prefer.

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Munich, 13.1.25

This time I must unfortunately come with two refusals at the same time. Herr von Hake's pamphlet may be very carefully prepared and most impressive, but it is too late, and in the meantime

[1] The allusion is to a three-volume *Selections from Nietzsche*, suggested by Spengler.

the material has been laid before the public so often, that there is hardly anything new to say.

As a matter of principle I cannot write an introduction to books by others. It has often been proposed to me and I have always refused, if I made one exception, it would be followed by a series of others, and the whole thing would take on the nature of an advertisement.

Also it is not possible to have the Nietzsche lecture printed as a pamphlet, which the firm of Beck already urgently desired. In its short form it would be suitable for a magazine; in a somewhat expanded form as an introduction. But if it is to stand on its own, I must either write a real book of some length or nothing at all. Yes, I am always hoping that the selections edition will be ready this year.

Kuno Graf Westarp to Spengler
Neue Preussesche Zeitung

Berlin S.W.11, 23.1.25

I have read with great interest your letter to one of our gentlemen with suggestions for the new *Kreuzzeitung*. I should like to use the opportunity to give you some short indications about our programme, which I would ask you to treat confidentially.

We are fully conscious that in the present time of political and economic reconstruction we must extend the Conservative spirit, which in its time made little Prussia great, and which you, Herr Spengler, have so effectively described, beyond the present circle of landowners and the middle class. . . . The paper will obtain a wider circulation by giving parity treatment to both Christian professions. If we change the outer clothes of *Kreuzzeitung*, and collect forces supporting the State from hitherto alien provinces, we are in no way departing from our Conservative conception of the State. . . . But we must summon active forces to attain our ends. It is therefore to you, honoured Herr Doktor, that I am addressing a request to help and to support us in every way possible. You are in a position to do that all the better, as you look down on our work from a high watchtower, and you enjoy the confidence

of wide circles, including Rhine heavy industry and the Hanseatic merchants. Now, during the period of our foundation, I should be most grateful for any suggestions we receive from you.

Walter Andrae to Spengler

Berlin-Lichterfelde, 30.1.25

. . . So far I have only got an idea of the new Indian finds from illustrated magazines and descriptions in the daily Press. Professor Langdon of Oxford, who visited us recently, said that something detailed would soon appear, or has appeared. I will try to get it for you. There are two places, one near Lahore, the other further south on the west bank of the Indus. The articles look very similar to the Sumerian—or better expressed early Mesopotamian —if not identical. I should like to wait for authentic descriptions and pictures.

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

4.2.25

Dr Knittel has kindly agreed to come here on the 16th of this month. You will see from the enclosed copy why I have asked Dr Knittel not to come before the morning of the 17th.

On account of the colonial question I am most anxious to be able to meet Lord D'Abernon on the 16th. Therefore I do not want to withdraw from the arrangements I have already made with the local English Consul-General. Our mandatory Herr Carl Woermann, eldest son of the well-known 'Africaner' Adolph Woermann, is going out for us on the 11th to the Cameroons. I rejoice that we shall be there to plant the good German flag on Mt. Cameroon.

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Munich, 9.2.25

Again it is a great pity. I was thinking with pleasure of that Thursday which I had spared with difficulty from my other

arrangements. I must be on Friday and Saturday in Berlin, and Sunday in Hamburg on political business. Early on Tuesday I am starting for a small rest somewhere in Sicily, in order to be able to arrange a new philosophical book in peace, without being reached by telegram and telephone, visits and letters. I have been making many preparations in the last few days, and have been trying—in vain—to buy a house.

A lecture by Wirth, then the reception of guests *and* my visit, that is too much to expect of your health. So I must put off my arrival in Weimar until the end of March and will come then for some days. But I am very sorry to fail this time, for I had my plans all ready and I had a lot to tell you, and proposals to make. All good wishes in the meantime. I am hoping for an enjoyable meeting at the beginning of spring. You should *also* spend this time of the year in Italy, where your brother discovered the colour of his language.

Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche to Spengler

Weimar, 12.2.25

I was very much depressed by your letter, tears actually came into my eyes. I had arranged and prepared everything so very nicely, and we should have sat so comfortably in my brother's room without hearing any of the noise in the house. I had so many things to discuss with you and pleasant news to give you. I and the Nietzsche Archive have done very well, and you would be pleased to hear about it. And now you are travelling out in the wide world and remaining inaccessible for such a long time. We should have had such a good opportunity to make preparations for the book which you had planned so nicely, and everything was arranged for it. It is remarkable that there should be this sudden craze for going to Sicily. I have heard of this idea from several sources, and when Herr and Frau Professor Francé told me the day before yesterday they were going to Sicily, I asked what was the meaning of this German folk emigration to Sicily. Herr Francé said the journey was so cheap now. In your case I think that there must be another reason, for as far as I can

remember the Mediterranean atmosphere is to a certain extent the atmosphere of your new book.

So I am sitting here today depressed and am dictating letters instead of talking to you. No really; your not coming is a great disappointment to me.

Spengler to August Albers

Palermo, 27.2.25

Here today it is as warm as summer. Your narrow angle and your serious discourse about last things could be out of place. So also Kierkegaard—molto cattiva religion—says the guide in S. Giovanni degli Eremiti. Next address Roma, fermo in posta.

Spengler to Otto Liebmann

Munich, 17.4.25

As I hear from Blankenburg your letter duly arrived. Unfortunately it is quite impossible for me to fall in with your suggestions.[1] I am working again at the moment at a philosophical work of some dimensions, and for this and other reasons I am leading a wandering existence, which excludes other activities. So far as I can see, the German and the entire European position is taking giant strides towards a new crisis, about which for obvious reasons nothing can be said publicly at the moment. When the time comes to depart from this compulsory silence, it is possible that I will interrupt my work and say or do something. So please be satisfied with these lines for the time being.

Benito Mussolini to Spengler

Rome, 24.4.25

I have received your publications *Der Staat*, *Die Wirtschaft*, *Neubau des Deutschen Reiches*, and *Politische Pflichten des Deutschen Jugend*, which you were kind enough to send me. I will read your works with great pleasure, and in the meantime I thank you for your courtesy in sending them.

[1] The editor of a legal publication had asked Spengler for articles.

Gregor Strasser to Spengler

Landshut, Bavaria, 2.6.25

After much consideration I have at last decided to carry out an idea I have had for some time, and to take up direct written communication with you in this way. I wish to emphasize that I have followed attentively for some years your publicistic and political work, and not only know and value your works, but believe that paths are to be found in them, the following of which is a necessity for the political strengthening and economic health of Germany for which we all are so warmly yearning. For a long time I have had the impression that your ways are parallel to those which we believe we have in part already found, and in part are still seeking, and from the similarity of purpose and also from what I believe to be a relationship in method and means, I deduce the possibility of benefit to both sides.

I do not know how far, out of the confusion of the politics of the day and the often petty squabbles over petty matters in our ranks, you realize with any degree of clarity the main lines of our National Socialist policy. I therefore enclose a copy of my Reichstag speech of May 20th, in which, starting with immediate questions of foreign policy, I have sketched the lines of our intentions in foreign, home and economic policy—of course only in general outline. I am fully conscious of the fact that with the more actual working out of the problem, an immense mass of questions, of difficulties, possibilities of solutions, etc., arises; it is my idea to create a means of examination, a clearing house! One method, not the only one, and not the best, I see in the publication of a serious political magazine, which in the manner of the socialist monthly magazines and similar political publications throws light upon and explains the problems of National Socialist policy, quite independently of any official influence.

In this connection I thought, not in the last instance, of you, and your political work—*The Reconstruction of the German Reich*—absolutely a mine of highly constructive and practical policy, in which, as I have said above, I think I see a far-going relationship with our aims.

I should be very grateful, if you would give me your opinion, whether an exchange of thoughts of that kind—of course purely personal and not in the least party political—condensed into occasional or regular association with the projected National Socialist monthly magazine appears to you to be expedient and profitable, as I believe it would be. . . .

Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi to Spengler

Vienna, June 1925

With a view to collecting the opinions of important Europeans as to the necessity and possibility of a united Europe, I venture to ask you for your position in principal to the enclosed questions.

As all the replies are to appear in the magazine *Pan Europa*, I should be very grateful for an early if only short reply.[1]

Spengler to Werner von Alvensleben

Munich, 7.7.25

Many thanks for your last letter. I am glad to see that we are at one over the decisive question. As the meeting, which has not yet been cancelled, much as I should like it to be, is to be held in Berlin on the 13th, the discussion with the Commercial Councillor must be postponed till the second half of the month, although a quick clarification is absolutely necessary in view of the conduct of Herr A. R. I attach a new extract from *Vorwärts*, in which he shows himself up again in his self-assertion and the fatal vagueness of all his motives and aims. As regards his taking part in the coming talk, I am convinced that this alone would make it

[1] Spengler's reply is not extant!

The writer of this letter was an Austrian Count descended from a Flemish noble family. He married a Japanese, his mother was Japanese, and he had a Greek grandmother (Kalergi). He was resident in Vienna, and had to leave Europe owing to his political views in 1938. In 1940 he became Professor of History at New York University.

In 1924 he started the newspaper *Pan-Europa*; that he had some initial success with his Pan-European movement shows the degree of optimism existing in Central Europe in 1924.—Tr.

completely unproductive. We would only show up his influence which exists in his imagination, and the plans he has put forward officially, in high relief, also the refusal to take any precautions. Apart from that I must unfortunately refuse to enter into personal relations with him. His political role is such that, whatever may be his real motives and purposes, one would have to treat with the unauthorized representative of a foreign power. For a German, good connections in Paris are suspicious. One would not have such connections, or think one had them, if there was no practical motive on the French side to cultivate them. . . . The important article in the MNN was followed instead of legal action by a weak *dementi* of thoroughly secondary points. For example it is a matter of indifference whether Herr Dard,[1] whose mission quite openly was to separate Bavaria from the Reich, and in consequence was generally cut, was not greeted in the street. The scandal existed in the fact that the two gentlemen ate together in the most public place imaginable. . . . Finally the late Hugo Stinnes, in a number of letters, gave others as well as myself an insight into the way A. R. with the knowledge of French sources attempted to bring to bear an influence which has hardly sufficiently been recognized, to persuade Stinnes to ruin the policy of passive resistance by abandoning the resistance of his own undertakings.

Gregor Strasser to Spengler

Berlin, 8.7.25

Allow me to thank you for your full reply to my letter, the contents of which appear to me to be too important for me to refrain from a discussion thereon, in spite of your general refusal.

I will not dwell on my feeling of personal satisfaction that you agree with the most important points in my Reichstag speech, but will come at once to the heart of your letter. I see this lies not so much in the—unfortunately only too justifiable—criticism on the leadership of the popular movement up to now, but particularly

[1] Dard was French minister in Munich; he supported a movement for Bavarian separatism, which failed, and he was replaced.

in a strongly emphasized refusal to overestimate any political 'will', and an even stronger demand for political 'action', first to obtain a clear idea of the force available, and of the strength of the opposition, then a cool use of such powers to reach the arranged goal. I am so very much in agreement with you in this view, and in this aim, that I can refrain from wasting a single word on the rightness and the necessity of this ground truth of every genuine policy. If I had not recognized this view to be one of the principal lessons of your political works, I would not have felt an inducement to write to you. . . . Here also I mention for the sake of better and sincere understanding, that your criticism of the Popular Movement, which you expressed so violently in your work *The Reconstruction of the German Reich*, was one of the reasons that I was anxious to approach you personally, because this criticism, in so far as it refers to the previous form and tactics of the 'Popular Movement', seems to me thoroughly justified, but not on the contrary, so far as it refers to its *essence.*

And here I come to the first failure in your exposition, in the material one, if I may so call it, you have, as is unfortunately a mistake almost generally made, confused two things: the 'Popular Movement' including its so-called expression of political will (represented as an organization by the 'Popular Freedom Party'), and the political-economic Power-idea of a National Socialism! (plainly and unfortunately more the first)—represented by the National-Socialist Workers Party. One is a movement which regards as sufficient the primitive solution of anti-Semitism and a nationalism as noisy as it is sincere, fed on a thousand sources of dissatisfaction, understandable, in fact inevitable, phenomena of reactions to war and revolution: the other is the conscious wish to rescue a real revolution out of the products wasted through the cowardice and incapacity of the leaders, also by the doctrinaire limitations of the Marxian theory! It means nothing less than the carrying out of a social revolution, but not of a Utopian World-Revolution, which of necessity is, and must remain, without prospects, for its necessary pre-condition of the cultures (and therewith the economics) being at the same stage, but of a German revolution by a German socialism! What is involved is none

other than the recognition of the fact that this social German revolution is a pre-supposition to Germany again obtaining freedom of action in foreign policy and vice versa, German independence in foreign policy is the only guarantee of this German socialism. . . . You realize that a programme is only of secondary importance, it is only a means—it is true a better or a worse means —for the attainment of political power, by which special original aims can be developed and carried through. You are now taking up the position that our movement has finally failed, and that I call your *material* mistake in your expositions, for the great political idea of National Socialism has not failed, but is only now beginning, which is equally the cause of much existing exterior and interior confusion.

And now I come to what I call your *personal* mistake, whereby I assume that it does not offend you if I speak with the same openness which your letter (to my joy) breathes.

You accuse our movement and me in particular (in connection with the foundation of a magazine) of overestimating the 'agitating power' of the written and spoken word, and point out correctly that this effect is very problematical, and in particular that it has no sustaining or constructive strength. But do you not feel these words are a sort of warning to yourself, a warning in fact that it is not sufficient to recognize something as right, and to say so, but after this recognition, that it is above all necessary to act. Your political aims in *The Reconstruction of the German Reich* and in other writings call directly for political action. It means conscious abstention from the great stream of development and consciously refraining from exerting influence, if one is satisfied with criticisms, however right, however powerful, however overwhelming they may be. Do you really think that I promise myself much political effect from a political magazine? No! But it could be a crystallization point for a number of men of clear vision and political will, whereby the paper becomes a small means, perhaps the smallest, of preparing the ground for such action, while it is its principal aim to be a non-obligatory opening for the formation of a suitable circle, and for the attraction of individual personalities.

It goes without saying that I am asking you to regard this letter as personal and confidential, also that, as will not surprise you, the views and the policies expressed therein are personal to me, though they are shared by a number of people of the rising National-Socialist generation. I should be delighted if you would continue this discussion, even if you tell me that your antagonism to these ideas is stronger than your sympathy.

NOTE: Gregor Strasser became a Nazi in 1920. When Hitler was in Landsberg fortress; Strasser organized the 'Voelkisch' party, which in 1924 polled sufficient votes to become the second largest party. Hitler swallowed his jealousy, and used Strasser to organize the Nazi party in North Germany. Strasser founded a newspaper in Berlin—the *Berliner Arbeiterzeitung*—edited by his brother Otto, and he selected a 28-year-old Rhinelander, who had been attracted by Hitler, named Paul Joseph Goebbels, to edit his fortnightly newsletter, the *N.S. Briefe*. Strasser's views were strongly inclined towards the 'Left', and he influenced Goebbels accordingly. In October 1925, Goebbels wrote in his diary: 'it is better for us to end our days under Bolshevism than to endure slavery under Capitalism', and again: 'it is terrible that we and the Communists should be bashing in each others' heads'.

Strasser's policy did not suit Hitler, who did not wish to antagonize the wealthy, and intended to expand at the expense of Russia. ('England and Italy', so he told Goebbels, 'are Germany's natural allies.')

In 1926 Hitler was able completely to convert Goebbels, who wrote: 'I love him . . . he has thought everything out . . . a just collectivism and individualism. As to the soil everything belongs to the people. Production to be creative and individualistic. Trusts, transport, etc. to be socialized. I am now at ease about him. . . . I bow to the greater man, to the political genius.' (Shirer—*The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, p. 163.) Hitler's great cunning in supplanting the Marxian idea of the 'Class War' with the idea of a completely unified nation, and instead of a class enemy—the bourgeois—providing a racial enemy—the Jews, was too much for Goebbels.

Strasser was deserted. Hitler had him murdered in 1934, when he got rid of inconvenient party members on the pretext of the Roehm rebellion.

The fact that the period between the wars was, at least on the Continent, one of extreme mental stress could account for the wide acceptance of two such extreme and unsophisticated ideas as the class war and the racial theory.

Spengler was an enemy of both these ideas.—Tr.

Alfred Jeremias to Spengler

Leipzig, 14.7.25

In your last kind letter you inquired about the Babylonian seals on the Indus . . . at the time I knew nothing about it. . . . I would

put this forward as some excuse for my silence. Not a week has passed without my feeling an urgent wish: if only you could discuss this or that with Dr Oswald Spengler. Up to the end of the winter term I had to live in the sphere of your great thoughts owing to my course of lectures, in which some of my colleagues took part, on O. Sp's Magian culture. The lively interest which the lectures aroused was a great experience for me.

Just before Easter I had a heart attack from overwork. I spent nine weeks at a Bad and at the sea. This included some days at Doorn where I, with Frobenius and some other gentlemen, held harmless learned discussions on matters concerning His Majesty's Corfu fund.

The Indian finds were also discussed in Doorn. The Kaiser read a letter from Forrer, reporting on it. I found it very interesting. It dealt with twenty stamp seals found at Harappa, near Montgomery, in the Punjab and in Monenjo-Daro in the Indus valley, eight settlement layers lower than the bottom Buddhist layer. . . . One of the seals . . . resembles a proto-Elamite one. Forrer is of opinion that these proto-Elamite texts, which we have in some ten tax lists and some royal inscriptions, belong to a province of a great power coming from the East (they date from about 2300 B.C.). The centre of this great power should first be sought for in south or south-east Afghanistan. If a provincial town belonging to this great power produced written documents like tax lists, it must have had chancelleries, archives, etc. Forrer hopes for the discovery of an Iranian Boghazkoi.

The question of who were the Sumerians becomes a still more burning one. I was much interested in your agreeing with me in a letter: that about 3600 B.C. there must have existed a culture in its spring under the leadership of great spirits in Sinai, comparable with that which occurred in the west about (A.D.) 1100. I would also find a similarity in that a Madonna myth and a Devil myth were opposed to one another. What did the people look like, among whom the great spiritual creation arose, whose space symbol was the Ziggurat (with its meaning: upwards in spirals)? In the oldest Sumerian memorials we have two different race types side by side: the type of the noble head of Lagasch, and the type

with the great bird noses. They are certainly two groups of different blood affinities and one speech affinity. . . .

I should like to see your discovery of the Pseudo-Morphosis carried still further. But I cannot generally emphasize the Pseudo so sharply. I see in many cases of Morphosis, where a new content is poured into old forms, as well as pseudo-phenomena, also such which give meaning to the changes in the circular course of the culture, and to the connective links a meaning which you believe that you ought to deny. Perhaps it is because I, as an intuitive Oriental (*N.B.* my ancestors are good Germans), see an essential connection between content and form. Only the west knows the division.

Further, you write: the influence of Babylon was great, but it never altered the world outlook of other nations. But surely in its observations of the calendar and myths, in its astral ideas, a super-cultured spiritual stream is hidden, which appeared in the oldest high culture of paradisical Sinai with the force of an original revelation, and which found its pleroma in the events of original Christianity, and which before that had fructified the whole world with its pre-Christian Christ idea: this stream is super cultural, as still today is the true original Christian message. The notion of the circular course belongs to the super cultural with its idea of things returning in a revolving circle, but finally standing fast on a point of completion in the sense of an end of the world, which Zarathustra was the first to conceive.

Why is it so difficult for a western intellectual to be a Christian in the original Christian sense? Because from his view of the world he thinks essentially in a straight line, though perhaps with a sense of distance which can protect him from the mechanical irreligiousness of straight-line thinking. Every religious man must experience a metanoia to organic circular thinking if he wishes to become an original-Christian. The presupposition can be found in western thinking. Nietzsche was a circular thinker in *Silverplana* when his Zarathustic appeared; Faust after the Easter night. 'Before me the day and behind me the night.' And if the words of the dying Goethe are legendary, 'Now comes the change to new changes', another saying is confirmed. As he dressed him-

self for the last time with the help of his copyist and his servant he asked what day it was. When they told him it was March 22nd he said: 'So now spring has come and we can have all the more hope of recovery.' If one grasps this thought generally one understands the circular idea of the creator-culture.

I should like to be able to write a Christian morphology of mankind. You could, but you recognize no morphology of the entire culture of mankind alongside the morphology of individual cultures. You do not see that real Christianity, which certainly is not that of the northern New-Protestant, means giving meaning to the meaningless.

Also I should like to assert most expressly that in your master work you have replaced the shallow evolutionary ideas of Rationalism with a morphological point of view.

As to Pseudo-Morphosis, I should like to say this: it makes a great difference which of two participating cultures contains the form, and which the content. When the Greeks in the post-Christian period (to a lesser extent in the pre-Christian centuries) adopted eastern pseudo-morphoses, bastards of the worst sort resulted, for example in later Neo-Platonism. When, however, the oriental Paul poured the Magian[1] and above all super-cultural

[1] Spengler introduced the Magian or Arabian culture between the 'classical' and the 'Faustian' cultures. The Magian idea was important to him for many reasons—it broke with the conventional historical sequence of ancient, mediaeval, modern, and it exemplified the cyclic theory. Its clue was the 'Cavern Astronomy', which, he says, dominated all the nations of the Middle East before, and at the beginning of the first century A.D. The world is a cavern arched over by the vault of Time. The age or aeon is surveyable from beginning to end; the question of the cavern is—When? There is an ordained time for every event; the only possible course, therefore, is resignation to the will of God. Islam, which came later, means submission. The total 'time' of the current aeon, according to the Persians was 12,000 years (of which 11,500 were completed in 1920). When the age is completed the Almighty can go back to the drawing-board and start again with a new creation. 'In the beginning was the Logos, the idea.' There is always room for a new idea.

'The light shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not.' The cavern is the scene of the battle between light and darkness, 'of the angels and Jazetas with Ahriman, Satan, and Eblis, in which Man, his soul and his spirit are involved'. Spengler emphasizes his belief that Jesus must of necessity have preached in this vein, or his listeners would have been unable to follow what he said. Spengler is anxious to show that Christianity is subject to mutations, if

Christian view of the world, into Greek forms something gigantic, world conquering appeared. What resulted from this can equally well go into the western spirit (the true sun-Christian Goethe proves this for me)[1] as it can into any other culture.

Helmut Franke to Spengler

Berlin, 14.7.25

At last I am sending you a short report regarding what has become of the plans of the younger front-soldiers such as Ernst Juenger, Otto Brues, etc., and myself. We have been trying for a long time to revive the *Grenzboten* as our organ, or to start another paper in which we can write independently, that is to say describe art, politics, and economics, as seen with our eyes. . . . The 'Putsches' of 1920 and 1923 seem to me to have been comparatively pointless. They will be dealt with separately in our

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not to complete discontinuity, to which Spengler subjects all cultures. Thus, he says, there is a notable difference between the Jewish apocalyptic and the spiritual religion of St John. Again the piety of the medieval Christian is quite different. 'Man walked continuously on the crust of the bottomless pit. Life in this world is a ceaseless and desperate struggle with the Devil, into which every individual plunges as a member of the Church Militant, to do battle for himself, and to earn his knight's spurs. Mary is the Protectress to whose bosom he can fly to be comforted, and the exalted lady who awards the prize for valour.'

Spengler predicates a striking contrast between the piety of St Augustine and that of 'Faustian' Europe: as 'the mystic community of Islam reaches beyond the grave', so 'Augustine's Civitas Dei was neither a classical polis nor a western Church but a community of believers exactly as were the communities of Mithras, of Islam, of Manichaeism, and of Persia', whereas 'if we could extract their Ego . . . from the piety of St Theresa, and Luther, and Pascal . . . there would be nothing left.'

[1] Jeremias seems to be alluding to a passage in the last pages of Eckermann's *Conversations with Goethe:*

'. . . for there is in them [the Gospels] the reflection of a greatness which emanated from the person of Jesus. If I am asked whether it is in my nature to pay them devout reverence, I say—certainly! I bow before Him as the Divine Manifestation of the highest principle of morality. If I am asked whether it is in my nature to revere the sun, I say again—certainly! For it is likewise a manifestation of the Highest Being, and indeed the most powerful which we, children of earth, are allowed to behold. I adore in it the light and the productive power of God, by which we all live, move, and have our being—we, and all the plants and animals with us.'

number three under the title 'Revolution without method'. These remarks seem to me to be quite superfluous, when addressed to someone like you, for whom these first few post-war years have already taken historical shapes. In any case I do not wish to anticipate matters. If you would be kind enough in principle to declare your willingness to help, and also to illuminate the exposé with advice and criticism, I would let you know when the article is due to appear.

Klara von Leipzig to Spengler

Munich, 15.7.25

Her Majesty the Kaiserin Hermine is coming to tea with me on the 19th instant, and has just written if I could not ask you to come also. I should be delighted if there is nothing to prevent you complying with this request, and ask you to come at half-past four.

From Edouard Meyer to Spengler

Berlin, Lichterfelde, 1.10.25

Only today am I answering your letter on my return from Russia; as might be expected, I found so much to do that it took up all my time. The stay in Russia was extremely interesting and instructive, apart from the fact that I was able only to obtain a slight knowledge of the main features among the treasures of the Hermitage and the other museums and collections. We saw and experienced a great deal in spite of all the pressing festivities. The picture one obtains is quite different from what one imagined. It is most interesting to see how the attempt to carry out the theories of Marx and Communism in economic life have failed completely —in the political sphere of course the position is altogether different—and how Lenin, of whose personality one receives a powerful impression, has spread around the taxes. The development is slowly returning within the new framework into the old pattern. Immense possibilities offer themselves for us, both in the economic sphere and in that of international politics; it is to be

hoped that our Government possesses sufficient insight and strength of will, while using the necessary caution, to make, at least, some use of them. . . .

Spengler to Gustav Haloun

Munich, 8.10.25

I acknowledge with many thanks the receipt of your article which I have read with the greatest interest. I am again busy at the moment with the questions touching on your theme. My doubts are, in particular, directed against the method in which the Hia and Schang period is treated as historical. I know your map from Voretsch's book. This picture contradicts the assumption of the development of a great power already in the second millennium before Christ. I consider the age of the three great emperors to be pure fantasy, and I have an impression also that the lists on the tortoises' shells cannot be real, for each decipherer has found exactly what he wished to find. . . .

It is now established that North Asia round the year 2000 B.C. was in an extremely primitive neolithic, with political forms well behind that of the oldest Vedas. The oldest finds on the Indus with archaic inscriptions in Elamite style reach back to the third millennium but have no connection whatever with Chinese conditions. I should like to know what can be ascertained from old sources about the culture of the Miaotse. It is certain that they knew of bronze and culturally were superior to the Chinese at that time. Our present knowledge of the early history of bronze founding permits the conclusion that this metal could not have reached *south* China before 1500 B.C., and that by sea routes. A certain number of the oldest ornaments certainly show this origin, for example the misunderstood imitation of ships' types, as they came into existence at a very early date in Indonesia (on the bronze vessels of the earliest Schou period). Can you inform me what is known about this non-Chinese southern culture?

It is certain that about the middle of the second millennium people who knew the plough and the cart overran and occupied the world of small states in the Hoangho. This cannot be separated

historically from quite similar invasions of India (Aryans), of the Aegean Sea (Proto-Hellenes) and, as we now know, of interior Asia as far as Cappadocia and Palestine, where at this period it teems with the names of Indo-Germanic rulers and other evidence. Neither the language nor the physical type point to a distinction between the movement in the east and the west, any more than at the Hun period. It is established today that a light-skinned race, resembling the Ainu, has left deep traces in the peoples of China, equally so throughout Russia and wide stretches of Germany, so even in Sweden (Dalecarlia). A second white race is recognized in Europe and represented by the Tocharians. As regards the languages, the individual Indo-Germanic and Central Asiatic languages run into one another to such an extent that it does not appear possible to narrow them down to any particular area. Examples of this at a later period are Hungary, the Alanians in Spain, the Galatians in Asia Minor and Tocharians in Turkistan. Here political form is much more important than speech and type. From 1500 B.C. these peoples have everywhere brought with them a strictly aristocratic tribal system, out of which directly developed a feudal system, and Chinese conditions about 1000 B.C. are clearly in this stage, to which the earliest conditions in India, Greece and Italy, that is to say Etruria, correspond fully. The new history of China by Krause is unfortunately a complete failure. So far as I can see, everything 'Indian' and 'Hellenic', the single-combat, the war-chariot, the arms, the Phyle, Phratries, tribes with ancestor-worship, domestic Lares worship, are also present in China. It seems to me correct therefore, to regard all assertions about the two first dynasties, and what goes before, as invention, even if the dynasties themselves and individual names could have had some meaning. In any case China in 1500 B.C. must have been a primitive region, with the exception of the precisely *not* Chinese south. We know today also that the Aryans in India struck up against a superior culture which they only overthrew by personal bravery, but with the result that much the greatest part of the old India (and equally also the old Greek) religion has belonged to the conquered. Since when has sea travel played a part in Chinese culture?

Spengler to August Albers

Rome, November 1925

Be sensible and come and settle in Rome. Come frate di San Domenico, who repents of his spiritual errors. Sunday great papal Mass. Prayer for the conversion of all heretics. *Orabo pro vobis.*

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Genzano di Roma, 16.11.25

I got slightly drunk today, a fabulous summer day, up above Lake Nemi, you are an idiot if the idea doesn't appeal to you to come and live here. In the distance shines a strip of sea. Nero rowed around here in a state barge. He understood more about life than you do. Received your snow letter. May things go well for you.

Spengler to August Albers

Rome (Il foro romans), 17.11.25

Continuous summer, after a few storms all the fields in spring green and daisies. Travel here as a hermit and live in a wine barrel (after you have drunk it dry yourself), on the Palatine. Greet Dr Beck.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Rome, 17.11.25

Dear polar bear,

Received the third registered letter. Here it is still splendid. After storms fields all green and covered with daisies. Could stay here for ever. Tomorrow I will visit Ostia. Next week I must be back home in mud and snow. Before that once more a *soldo* in the nearby fontana.

Edouard Spranger to Spengler

Berlin, 26.12.25

An International Philosophical Congress is to be held at Cambridge (Mass.) on September 13–17, 1926, the programme of

which I am sending you. I have been approached to inquire from you, whether you feel inclined to take part in it. They attach particular importance there to your attending it. Professor Coss of Columbia University writes to me: We are anxious that Dr Oswald Spengler should come, possibly on the same programme with H. G. Wells, Division 6, Section 4, Philosophy of History. We have made no provision for travelling expenses, but I very much hope that you can persuade him to come. I have not written to him.

Although I myself cannot take part in the conference, I have . . . undertaken the preparations in Germany for it.

1926

Spengler to Edouard Spranger

Munich, 8.1.26

. . . I am unfortunately not in a position to accept the invitation to the Philosophical Congress, first for financial reasons—for the means of the Assistance Committee of course should not come into the question—also and principally because I have been busy for some time with an extensive philosophical work, which I must finish in the course of this year, and which a journey to America with its strong and singular impressions might seriously affect.

'*Urfragen*—proto-questions.'

Edouard Spranger to Spengler

26.1.26

I must recognize of course the grounds for refusal contained in your friendly letter. I should like to say however, for the sake of preventing mistakes, that the 200 dollars mentioned are not from the funds of the Assistance Committee, but from a fund put by the management of the Congress in America at the disposal of the gentlemen specially invited.

Spengler to Gustav Haloun[1]

Munich, 5.4.26

. . . I think I can give you today some *details* of the connection between antique, Indian, and Chinese pre-culture. . . . An exhaustive report is not possible in a letter, but I should like to indicate some points which might be of interest to you. One must use the term 'indogermanic' more carefully, and then in the

[1] Gustav Haloun was a sinologue, eventually at Cambridge.

original sense when it only indicates a group of dialects. The race question almost disappears. I see indications, however, that tribes, which brought along with them the 'Satem' variety of these dialects, not only overflowed Asia Minor, Syria and Palestine about 1400 B.C., so that Indian names cropped up in Jerusalem and Cappadocia, but also as 'sea-peoples' 'vikinged' from 1400–1200 B.C. in the Mediterranean, and under such names as Danai, Achaeans, Sards, Pelasgian-Philistines, Turscha-Etruscans, in part at least spoke such dialects. It was the later hordes from the interior that developed the Centum dialects as a mother speech. Nothing is implied hereby as to the race of these tribes.

We know that the race type of the Ainu of the present day is widespread as far as the Alps, and is often the prevailing type in eastern Europe. According to Paudler there are two light-skinned races, of which the Cro-magnon corresponds to the Ainu. This is all much older than the appearance of the Indo-Germanic[1] languages. I do not believe in any racial difference between the original Tschou and the very Tartar looking Sards on Egyptian reliefs about 1200 B.C., from whom Sardinia took its name. That conquerors at once abandon their own language is shown by the Normans in France, England, and Spain, and innumerable other tribes, such as the Philistines in Canaan. So the Tschou can very well have spoken one of these languages.

Elizabeth von Schmidt-Pauli to Spengler

Frankfort a.m., 6.4.26

In general one appeals direct to the lieber Gott; but the Catholic Church, to the symbolic truth of which you will one day rise, appoints intermediaries. The Research Institute is so far Catholic that it also believes in intermediaries. I am now selected to make representation to you,[2] that at a moment when our ship is being flung to and fro in the trough of the waves, you should not insist

[1] In the Indo-Germanic languages there is a distinction between Centum languages (Latin centum=100)—the Greek, Latin, Romansch, German, and Celtic languages—and Satem languages (Persian Satem=100), Slav and Balto-Slav languages, Iranian, and Sanscrit.

[2] Spengler had resigned from the board of the Frobenius Institute.

on it being wrecked. We cannot lower the little lifeboat. Also we need your presence on the bridge. What more can I say? Every intermediary has his own method. I beg you to grant my request. In return I shower Easter bells, Easter flowers and Easter stars upon you.

Edouard Spranger[1] *to Spengler*

Temporarily Insel Reichenau im Bodensee, 14.4.26

. . . I willingly agree that the modern culture-philosophy is one of the many symptoms of a 'late' scepticism. The question is only whether the inevitable struggle to overcome such scepticism is necessarily (to use your phrase) 'destined' to failure. Your excursions on this theme in the *Prussian Year Books* have given me no final answer. Your personal attitude towards our time (apparent in your latest publications) does not seem to me to convey an absolute scepticism. . . . Actually complete Relativism[2] is possible in the writing of history: but only as a result of weakness in the historian. Apart from other possibilities, a heroic view of history, etc., which I will not mention, the historical focus, which understands every μορφη of the past, as a form, which in its place and

[1] Spranger was a philosopher, and Vice-President of the Goethe Society in Weimar.

[2] Goethe in *Geistes Epochen* expresses the idea of a series of ages, an age of poetry, of theology, of philosophy, of prose—a series which repeats itself, while man's mentality is conditioned by the age in which he happens to live. Spengler, in his pessimism, seems to forget that his own viewpoint is not a 'God's eye' viewpoint, but must also be relative. 'It is not our fault,' he says, 'that we are living in the early winter of complete civilization (civilization for Spengler means the last stage, the death of a "culture"), and not in the midsummer of a ripe culture like the time of Pheidias or Mozart.'

Thus Spengler sees no escape for Germany from the impending 'Age of Caesarism'. Professor Schröter in *Metaphysik des Untergangs* writes: 'Paramount in the case of Spengler is his bitter suffering due to the period of decline in which he was born. This seems to be the secret reason for his viciously, or childishly, exaggerated glorification of the "Beast of Prey Man". But this realization of his reactions is no excuse for its unfortunate effect, particularly in the country, on which, in reality, the catastrophe was to fall, a catastrophe brought about by a brutal, barefaced policy of power and force. Truly demonic is the linking together of the ripening reality and its recognition. There has been nothing like it since Amos and Isaiah.' Tr.

its time was exactly *that* which it could and must be, is not equivalent to Relativism, but in its way also a recognition of eternal ideas, in the same way that I do not demand of the cherry tree which is in flower before my window, that it should flower like an apple tree or come into flower at the time of the lime blossom.

The continuation of your work according to what you tell me seems to have a tendency in that direction. The question remains whether one agrees that a culture from its inner law (from which it certainly cannot escape) can go wrong by collision with other forces or as a result of premature inward development. What *we* westerners of the present day can be is certainly confined within narrow limits, but what is determined can, in my opinion, turn out purer, or impurer, higher or weaker. To realize this, not only in thought, but in intention and needs is what I am struggling for. By profession and fraternity I am a university philosopher (Thank God at any rate not a Privy Councillor), and I have taken much trouble (compare the end of *Meistersinger*) to learn and to practise the rules of this art, 'in order that the law may be fulfilled'. But I am very far from regarding this art and its rules as the last word. Rather it is the same with me as, according to what you say, it is with you. I am struggling, by going beyond history, to overcome 'mere' history.

Herr von Seeckt to Spengler

Berlin, 21.4.26

You have really delighted me by your good wishes for my sixtieth birthday. Please accept my hearty thanks.

Herr Hans Erich Stier[1] *to Spengler*

Berlin-Lichterfelde W., 16.5.26

. . . A historical worker today finds himself forced to come back again and again to your great work to work out how far he is to take it into consideration seriously in connection with his own project. I make this admission all the more gladly, as I myself

[1] Erich Stier was a professor of Ancient History.

have been in unbroken mental communication with your book for five-and-a-half years, and to my great amazement I kept on discovering new surprising profundities, and that although to begin with—I must also make this confession to you—I maintained, or perhaps better expressed, I tried to maintain, a very negative attitude to your arrangement of the historical world. In the meantime your thought has actually exerted a great influence everywhere; the original perplexity regarding your idea (which can be seen clearly in most of the so-called criticisms of your work) has been succeeded by more or less obvious imitation. I am busy with the establishment of the principles according to which we have today to write a history of the classical world, with the narrower aim of bringing these principles to bear in practice in a not too distant period, in the fourth and fifth centuries before Christ. It is the age which in essence seems to 'correspond' to our baroque period. . . .

The great difference between previous research and your thought lies, if I see rightly, in the meaning attached to the expression 'Culture'. It is remarkable that this does not seem to have been brought forward anywhere so far in the discussion of your work. Above all one perceives that you have not forced this fundamental idea on the material, but rather that you have discovered it from the material, that it is essentially an empirically acquired idea. (Spranger takes the opposite view.) I believe I have not misunderstood you.

The summing up of the entirety of historical phenomena under the concept of Culture and the cultures, in the form you have given it, seems to me an achievement all the more astounding, the longer I devote my thoughts to the 'problem of world history'.

The former conflict between 'political' and 'cultural' history has suddenly become purposeless and has been completely replaced by a higher unity. How difficult it was for the historian, after he had become accustomed to bringing in art, religion, and the other cultural fields, to treat these neutral sections; how miserable was, as a rule, the result. . . . I would ask you how you arrived at your concept of the Culture. I could not gather this information from your explanations in Vol. I, p. 55 and onwards. When one

surveys previous research, one sees that your interpretation of 'Culture' is far from obvious, but that nevertheless you have given the word a meaning, so that at last after all sorts of detours a simple solution has been found, which solves great difficulties with ease. . . . After the new thought has once been expressed it is almost impossible to put oneself back in a time when it was not realized. Perhaps my question is not only somewhat indiscreet, but also foolish, as in general it is very difficult to reply in writing to such questions.

Spengler to Hans Erich Stier

Munich, 27.5.26

I am much pleased to hear of your plan to write about the 'baroque period' of classical culture. . . . Unfortunately so far as I can see I shall not be coming to Berlin in the near future, otherwise I should like to discuss these questions with you. What you write about the necessity of regarding the culture concept otherwise than was previously possible, is quite correct. Only when one sees in it not a sum of 'achievements' or forms, but as something organic, does one attain to a comprehension of the profundities in the development of classical history. Where did I obtain my own idea? I myself do not know. I have learnt about the development of mathematics, the history of art, and recent politics, each for itself, and in a different way, partly by systematic work, partly by natural intuition, and as I found a unity therein, there arose of itself the impression of something living which one could only call a culture. It was thus an experience[1] and not a construction. You will have the same experience in your own task, if you observe the relationship of form in the development of the Polis and of Art. Would you be in a position to give me information on the following point: in the representations of the foreign peoples in Crete and on the mainland, the Cefti and the sea peoples, so far as I can see were represented as partly light, partly dark complexioned. With the information at my disposal I

[1] Goethe's distinction between intuition and analysis. *Nachträge zur Farbenlehre.*—Tr. *Vide* also note on letter of 5.4.36.

cannot arrive at a decision. I should be very grateful if you could give me a note on this subject as you have Ed. Meyer's photographs and the Berlin collections at your disposal.

Von Winterfeld to Spengler

Berlin, 9.9.26

Reichswehr Ministerium. Army Command

A collection is being made in this department of publications of the professional military Press in foreign countries dealing with questions of organization. They will be as a rule collected twice in the month and thus made available to a limited circle of readers.

Owing to the claims made on all the resources of the nation for the purpose of defence, questions of organization extend beyond the purely military point of view to the entire life of the people, in particular to the economy. The problems thus involved obtain a particular importance in view of the envisaged disarmament conference.

From the standpoint of the department of Army Organization it is therefore very desirable that, in addition to the military departments, the leading personalities in the domains of industry, finance, food production and geography should be kept in touch with foreign ideas. I therefore permit myself to have the numbers sent to you regularly in future, and to express the hope that the dispatch will not be unwelcome.

The contents are not secret. It is however desired for official reasons that the place of issue should not be made known publicly.

Max Ebert to Spengler

Königsberg Pr., 24.9.26

I am very glad to hear that you are going to give us a work dealing with the results and problems of prehistorical research. I will willingly do all that I can to supply your wants. . . .

NOTE: Since 1925 Spengler had been planning works on pre-history. A 'Proto-history' as well as 'Proto-questions'. Of the history there are only fragments in his papers. Max Ebert edited a lexicon of pre-history.

[1926]

Richard Korherr[1] *to Spengler*

Regensburg, 21.10.26

Highly honoured Master!

Since six years ago, still sitting on the school bench I got hold of a copy of your powerful work *The Decline of the West*, I have not been able to escape from its spell. Last year I decided to make your book the foundation for my doctorate. The work is now finished: only one thing is lacking, permit me to dedicate it to you, the greatest thinker of our time, as an expression of my deepest reverence.

I venture to send you a copy. It contains the original title and original form of the thesis for a doctorate, which I would naturally alter in the event of publication, particularly with regard to the title and foreword.[2] Please accept the dedication! The gifts which nature has bestowed on me only enable me to thank you in halting and stammering manner for the greatness and beauty which I encounter every day from your work.

Spengler to Richard Korherr

28.10.26

After looking through your work, I accept your proposed dedication with my best thanks. I will tell you honestly that up to now I have read nothing which has completed and deepened a suggestion in my book into such knowledge and understanding. I would earnestly advise you not to embody your work as a dissertation in the mass grave of the libraries, but as is your intention to give it publicity. I am convinced that it will have a great effect. In this case I would advise you to include the staggering statistics of recent years as fully as possible at the end of the whole picture. . . .

[1] Dr Richard Korherr later became chief statistician to Himmler. He reported to his master on 23.3.43 that 633,000 Russian Jews had been 're-settled'.

[2] The thesis was entitled 'Birth-Decline'.

Richard Korherr to Spengler

Regensburg, 3.11.26

You have made me happy by the acceptance of the dedication of my thesis. Your praise is my highest reward for my labour. The work has also found recognition at the University of Erlangen. . . .

Now after long hesitation I am venturing on a great and immodest request. Do you consider, most honoured master, my work worthy of a short introduction from your pen?

Spengler to Richard Korherr

Munich, 14.11.26

Unfortunately it is not possible for me to carry out your wish, because I refuse such on principle, in order to avoid having to agree in certain cases against my will. Moreover, I think it is not necessary for the success of your work, and that on the contrary it is not desirable to let the connection be too prominent. I should involve you thereby with a horde of opponents, who would not have had the least objection to the work itself, and, further, a good work like yours does not require such help.

August Albers to Spengler

19.11.26

Today I was in the flat and fetched the post. I rang, the door opened, but the two customary genies standing on the right and left of the door and greeting the guest with friendly smiles were missing. Theresa received me and accompanied me to the post table where everything including writing paper, envelopes and ink stood ready. I picked out the letters, had another look at the new pictures, particularly the picture from the Piloty school and the Guardi, and then took myself off, leaving Theresa with wise injunctions to close the roll-up slats carefully, not to open the door when the wicked wolf was outside, and to be on her guard and to jump to the side if the wolf threatened her with a loaded revolver. She sends messages. I will go again on Tuesday. Last

Tuesday at 12.30 I thought of you, how you will be enjoying the wonders of Rome, walking, listening and tasting (lobsters and Frascati). I am hoping soon to get a cartolina from you, and remain, awaiting this.

Your Excellency's
most humble major domus.

August Albers to Spengler

23.11.26

I have read your card with your sister's funny drawings with great pleasure. Her drawing of the flapper and the way she has managed to retain the characteristics of all three of you is really excellent. But she makes herself too fat.

Now, as you are having so much wet weather, I am sending you a little poem about our weather. It has now got cold and grey and I hope you have plenty of sun. . . .

The money from America has arrived and will be credited to you. I have already told you that the sale in America is going well. In Munich at the moment there are Spengler windows at Kaiser, Rieger, and Lehmkuhl. But the Press up to now has not distinguished itself by its interest. You know how quickly time goes now. I hear from retail booksellers that today best sellers often only have a lifetime of fourteen days and then sink into obscurity. It is really high time that you came out with the world history[1] and again drew attention to yourself. Now an idea of you and your book, which does not agree with reality, has settled in people's minds. The public is just as satisfied with an idea as it is with the cinema and the radio. . . . So that you should have something to laugh at, I send you the photograph from the Universum, read the text too, after you have strengthened yourself with a glass of Frascati. . . . The two volumes of *Gregorovius* have arrived, two little elephant volumes but with very interesting old pictures, including a picture of the circus maximus about 1700. . . .

[1] Spengler planned an expansion of *The Decline*.

August Albers to Spengler

26.11.26

I thank you for the card with the Vatican garden, from which I see that you are taking baths in Vini Italiani at Leonardi's. You say nothing about the weather, and I fear that it must be dirty, for one reads in the newspapers all sorts of dreadful stories of dam bursts in Upper Italy. I can tell you today that Frobenius has written. It has given him much pleasure to hear, from time to time, what the good people of Munich are saying about the expedition, and about him. He makes some bitter comments. . . . I opened a registered letter from the Orania Co in Prague, as I smelt an offer in it and rightly, my transcendental sense had not deceived me. I have written to the people in your name, naturally in the most polite form. . . .

Finally the important news, that we have had frost here, and that consequently the brown coal is enjoyable, and that I will order the sausages as soon as I hear that Serenissinus is coming home. Think of me when from an omnibus you cast glances at the ruinibus Romanibus.

August Albers to Spengler

Munich, 29.11.26

As up to today I have heard nothing more from you, I imagine that you are still in Rome. In the meantime my article about *The History of a Book* appeared last Saturday in the *Buchhandler-Börsenblatt*. I have sent a copy to Mrs Atkinson[1] and to Mr Knopf. Have you sent them a copy of your Jubilee edition? You ought to do that! A card came from Harrasowitz, whether you know of *The legal philosophy of Oswald Spengler* by Josef L. Kunz, the writing is not bibliographically understandable. Do you know Friedrich Gundolf's *Caesar in the Nineteenth Century*? It contains pages about Bachofen on the subject of Caesar. I have just received a long article from the *Vossische Zeitung* of 25/11 'Thoughts

[1] The Atkinsons translated *Die Untergang* into English, and Knopf was the American publisher.

concerning Manfred Schröter's *The Dispute about Spengler*' by Ludwig Gott. He calls Schröter's book an intellectual achievement; a model document of fruitful criticism. It is an article 52 cm. long. As at the present time you certainly do not want to read such a long essay, I am keeping it for your return. There is a splendid description of your book. He calls it a work born of the spirit of self-awareness and self-orientation. A study of the geology of culture and the conception of the world.

I have got on loan from a friend of Graeser a copy of *The Art of the Fugue* and am to send it on to you to look at. You will then have to send it on somewhere else. I advise you to buy it for your library; I would like to play for you out of it in the evenings. I have already played nine fugues; sometimes the tears in my eyes interfered with my playing. What worlds open up before the inward eye, what unheard-of harmonies appear in the severe three or four voice accompaniment (without any free interlude). The Greek concert was a poor affair, *Alte a capella*—songs of the eighth–fifteenth century were played purely instrumentally. The little hymn to Apollo was the burlesque, I did not trouble with the new Greek music and warmed myself in the Ceylon tearoom. . . . Theresa has got the card of San Paulo and I have explained it to her. . . . Greet the ladies from me and remember me to the headwaiter at Leonardi's.

Your old friend Albert.

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Munich, 19.12.26

Returned from Italy, where I have enjoyed beautiful weather—you will have received my card. I send you my best wishes for the celebration day, this time in the hope and expectation that Nietzsche Archive's wish for the prolongation of the copyright period will be fulfilled. Unfortunately I cannot take up the question of the prolongation publicly. If it was a special case, the works of Nietzsche, it would be a simple question, but actually it is a question of the purely business interests of the whole publishing industry and of all the authors, without any distinction

between the real value of the work and the possible profits of those who would gain from it. Personally I am indifferent. In the interests of German literature, however, I must regret that author's rights should exist without limitation for any trashy novel and every newspaper article, however valueless. We can thank this financial overvaluation of every sort of writing for the increase of inferior literature since the Goethe period, which today owing to a business collusion in articles and magazines has made the giving of publicity to a real work of literary art almost impossible. If literature, in spite of all the outcry about the necessitous state of writers, were not a comfortable and lucrative trade, the majority of 'contributors' would have gone into other trades. Actually it is in general precisely those gentry who only produce literature for business reasons, who take up the case most loudly for the prolongation of the copyright period. At the moment I have before me an appeal signed by well-known men of learning and writers protesting strongly against the prolongation in the interests of the circulation of important literary works.

What I have written here, I would not dare to say in public, it would cause a tremendous outcry from the swarm of literati, and in addition it would have no effect. . . .

1927

Spengler to Leo Frobenius

Munich, 8.1.27

While I most heartily reciprocate your new year wishes, in particular for the culture-morphological institute, which will need good fortune in the coming years, I avail myself of the opportunity of your letter to explain quite openly the causes of my reserved attitude, and finally of my withdrawal from the board. I think you will take a reasonable view of my motives, even if, as I fear, they affect you painfully. . . .

Since its foundation I have always discriminated between the scientific and the business side; while I believed in the first, and never permitted myself a doubt about it, the second in its adventurous character went against my taste, which perhaps you will call middle class, but there it is. In my opinion a learned institute, that has to struggle for recognition, should not be conducted in wild west style with a cheerful alternation between poverty and extravagance, which is quite in order for a hunting expedition. . . .

However, it was not this kind of administration which occasioned my withdrawal. I decided on this when I was convinced that the journey to Egypt would take place. From your letter I assumed that it was a question of excavating a Pharaoh's grave, although the Egyptian Government, as is known, only grants such concessions to professional Egyptologists. Then wide Press publicity was given to the news that it was a question of unknown parts of the Sahara, or Arabia, Persia and Turkistan, and that the expedition would last one or two years—plans which it was obvious from the start could not be carried out. It was suddenly clear . . . that the real parties in the undertaking are a film publisher and a motor firm. I have nothing against film expeditions,

but they should not be combined with scientific expeditions, and the autocaravan was announced all over the place. Meanwhile the years became months and the quarters of the earth became the tourist routes of Egypt. And now I come to my strongest objection, against which I have been arming myself mentally for a long time. When I got to know the Africa-Archive here in Munich, I was absolutely convinced that I had in front of me methods free from objection, and completely assured results, in a field which was at that time completely strange to me. Therefore I have in every way supported it, both with the industrial benefactors, and with professors who expressed serious doubts. In the meantime I have slowly worked through the latest literature on prehistoric and ethnographical problems, in order to establish the main lines of history back to the sixth millennium, and have recognized in an increasing degree the uncertainty of the constructions in the works of the Research Institute. Here the basic mistake of the culture circle theory has avenged itself, that of neglecting absolute chronology and regarding 'later' or 'earlier' as the same as late and early, although for example the relatively earliest in central Africa is much later than the latest in Egypt. I have been wanting to tell you this by word of mouth for a long time, because in the short space of a letter it sounds more severe than is intended. . . .

Ludwig von Wilm to Spengler

Frankfurt, 12.1.27

. . . If I were to tell you that Frob[enius] appeared here in the circus at New Year, you probably would not believe me, therefore I permit myself to send you by this post a prettily illustrated newspaper report. From eyewitnesses I hear that Frob[enius] rode in front on a camel in 'a khaki suit torn by thorns and a southwester pressed down on his head', behind him followed on horseback: an employee of the Institute and his daughter Ruth in tropical costumes, and finally four camels, heavily laden with chests, on which the inscription D.I.A.F.E. (German Inner-African Research Expedition) could be seen; six clowns buzzed

around this procession crying: 'My money is finished, my money is finished'. Two trumpeters blew continually: Tati tata. Otherwise no more news from Frankfurt. But I think this is enough.

Hermann George Scheffauer to Spengler

Berlin-Grunewald, 18.1.27

I have been instructed by the *New York Times* to ask you for an article, dealing with the application of your philosophical principle to the development, namely decline, of the United States. Something like *The Decline and Fall of America. The Times*, as you may remember, published a long and detailed review of your book. If you are good enough to produce the article, I would ask you to keep it within about 2,800 words. The paper (the best and best known in America) would pay $100 for this article. I hope that you agree to this honorarium. I myself would translate the essay—then you would have a guarantee that all the niceties of your style will be correctly interpreted. May I expect an early answer or this essay?

Spengler to Albert Hermann

Munich, 7.2.27

Many thanks for your letter. To repeat important points: I do not believe that there ever was a proto-odyssey at all. When one goes into such questions, it is easy to make the mistake of imagining the existence of such ancient writings on the analogy of works published today. In the research into the Gospels, for instance, one talks of proto-Mark, as if anyone at that period had had the idea of an original text. Regarding the Homeric poems, one must carefully distinguish between the time of the Skalds and that of the literary epic. These sagas, of which each singer possessed his own private supply, which were never learnt by two minstrels in the same form, were undoubtedly varied in content in a quite careless manner, according to locality and occasion, so that one can talk of related themes but not of an original version, Since the development of written, that is to say actual literary productions,

the circulation of the texts certainly became greater and a uniformity in the themes more common; all the same I am convinced that every rhapsodist possessed his own text written by himself, which he used very freely as a basis for the recital of the time being. There were therefore as many original odysseys, to stick to this term, as there were rhapsodists, and in no case did the form and the localization coincide. It is obvious that at a court in Etruria, or Cyprus, or Lesbos, quite different geographical conditions would have to be borne in mind. The *Odyssey* in its present form is thus the product of a selection from texts, as to which at the present time we cannot form any idea. I see its general development something like this. In the middle of the second millennium before Christ there was a regular sea traffic in the Mediterranean from Spain to Southern Russia, as is shown by archaeological finds. Think for example of the relationship of the pottery from Petreny with that from South Babylonia. At that time Malta possessed a highly developed culture, and Cyprus was then called Alaschia. That it is connected with the expression Elysium, is shown by the name Rhadamanthys, who as judge of the dead in Elysium is represented as an actual King in Phaistos. This large-scale sea traffic was destroyed by the sea peoples. Then at a much later period the Phoenicians and Ionians reunited the ancient threads. It is quite wrong to think of discoveries and new foundations. All the Ionian colonies on the Black Sea are infinitely older than the Ionians themselves. The Saga themes of the *Odyssey* must date from this old period, as is shown by the geographical and personal names in Homer. We shall never be able to say what they ever meant by Ogygia or Scheria. In the great centres of this sea world (Etruria, Tunis, Crete, Libya, etc.), exactly as in our own epic period, one took a point within one's own geographical horizon, and exchanged it on occasions for another. The geographical horizon of the *Odyssey*, as we know it, was not greater but smaller than that of the Skalds in the Minoan period, for since that time the knowledge of the western Mediterranean had considerably decreased. I do not think therefore that definite geographical points are connected with the sequence of events in the text (of the *Odyssey*) as we have it, at

least not to the extent that we can restore a wandering voyage in its most original form. That certain memories of Crete and Tunis have a share in it, I am quite certain; but one dare not go any further. To mention one only, the name of the island Ogygia must in some way have a connection with the Demon's name Ugugu (more often Igigi), of the Babylonians. The same name appears as Gyges in the saga localized there. Ogygia first of all in some ancient language only meant a part of the underworld, while much later, when this meaning had faded out, attempts were made to identify it as some real island. . . .

Leo Frobenius to Spengler

Frankfurt a.m., 24.2.27

As you have been informed by the office, as the result of perpetual cases of influenza in our office, only the day to day business could be carried out, and we were not in a position to put up a document adequate to serve as an answer to your letter of 8.1., as quickly as I should have liked. . . . You may be sure that it is the same with me as it is with you, when you say that you find no occasion for resentment, if views, however opposed they may be, are put forward against your own works by a responsible personality. . . . I can assure you that neither a film company nor a motor firm had any share in the expedition. The six cars were duly paid for and all propaganda were *a priori* refused. The film people made a harmless culture film of the Nile, but paid the expenses, about 13,000 marks, out of their own pockets. Your statements astound me even more, when you say that the expedition travelled only on routes permitted to tourists. Pardon me, and do not be offended when I tell you that this statement is incomprehensible in a man of learning, and frivolous in the case of anyone else. . . . As has been stated in the Press, I can tell you that our motorized expedition travelled through extremely important parts of the Nubian desert, which have never been reached by a tourist, nor even by the Egyptian Survey Department, and through parts which have never been trodden by an explorer.

You write 'since Schweinfurth saw the rock drawings in the

area in question an extensive literature has appeared, so I do not know what there was new to see'. In answer to this I can tell you that our honoured friend Schweinfurth, shortly before his death, left it to me, as I had described the West African pictorial art so thoroughly, to devote myself to the Nubian desert in the sense of his publication of 1912. But quite apart from that, what you say surprises me very much. You yourself have had the experience that thousands of learned men have had access to knowledge of material, without being able to grasp its living content. You say in page two of your letter: 'The prehistoric finds from the Delta to Nubia are today so well known, and have been so widely investigated, that to co-ordinate new finds in an adequate manner would require many years of specialist study.' I am not quite certain to what extent your methods of working and of forming opinions can be reconciled with the axiom with which you confront me. I perceive here a tendency in you which is quite new to me—the adoration of the printed word, and of specialists and specialized knowledge. I have studied your works in vain, to find a quotation from which it would appear that this is the principle on which you work. . . . You say regarding our activity: 'in the meantime I have carefully gone through the literature regarding prehistoric and ethnographic problems, in order to establish the main historical features back to around about the sixth millennium'. Kindly excuse me if I again say that the moment you take up this standpoint, your understanding of the questions which concern the Institute of Culture Morphology becomes altogether confused. The main work of the Institute and of all its fellow-workers consists of the investigations of the stuff, the material. We are concerned with the object, and not with its application. Many a time we come across articles in *Ebert's Real Lexicon*, which cause much merriment in the Institute.

After we have worked on it for many years, we arrive at a point from which we can view the material in question in such a way, that an almost exact scientific description becomes possible. When we have an opportunity for investigation, we encounter self evident facts, in comparison with which the literary perceptions and theories look like baroque scrollwork. I have come to

the conclusion that the study of the literature, in so far as it refers to prehistoric and ethnological subjects, is pleasant reading for such as have to give a course of lectures, or those who wish to obtain a nice superficial picture, but not for those who wish to go further in serious scientific inquiry. Today, in fact, when we, for example, examine certain ornaments, we do not go to the books, but our assistants in London, Florence, Rome, Paris, Athens, etc., with full knowledge take up the question of what they already know once again, and garner, in particular, broken pieces, which are often undervalued, though often they are very valuable. The thousands and thousands of specimens so obtained pass judgment on the material, which assume a new appearance. I need not say that the assistants have of course to master the literature. But just as a biologist does not work on the history of chromosomes, neither does the pre-historian nor the ethnographer. The biologist works at the microscope with his cultures, the ethnologist with his objects, and then peoples, from whom the objects derive. Every literary study gives at best a skeleton, never a representation of the living.

I must place the following in the foreground of my reply to your attacks. Herr von Boeckmann's book has nothing to do with the Institute. I mention this because your criticism perhaps only applies to this particular production. . . .

You write further on: 'Here the fundamental error of the Culture Succession Theory (Kulturkreislehre)[1] has paid the

[1] The *Kulturkreislehre* appeared first in Frobenius' work *The Origin of African Cultures*. It was discovered that a number of similar culture elements—domestic utensils, ornaments, habits, etc.—were found over a wide range. Thus North American Indians chewed tobacco leaves mixed with lime obtained from burning mussel shells, and Malays and Tamils chewed betel leaf mixed with lime. If these similarities were found at points A, B, C, D, a line drawn through A, B, C, D, constituted a *Kulturkreis*, part of an original, perhaps a far greater unity. From these unities an attempt was made to reconstruct history backwards. Frobenius was called the 'Darwin of ethnology', a title which was sufficient to embroil him with Spengler. He objected to the material evidence adduced by the school of Frobenius. 'When in some prehistoric stratum we have identified an accurately known type of pottery, we cannot safely argue from it to the customs and religion of the population to which it belonged.' (*Decline*, Vol. 12, p. 35).

Spengler, of course, objected to the idea of a continuous line of development; he believed in *Wandlungen*—turning points, epochs in the original sense of the

penalty for neglecting absolute chronology and regarding "later" and "earlier" as late and early, although, for example, the relatively earliest in Central Africa is infinitely later than the latest in Egypt.' From these sentences I gather that you regard yourself as one who understands the question, and is an expert on this point. I regret to have to define this sentence, and in particular the last words, as the expression of such a lack of knowledge that it is impossible to discuss the matter. All the phenomena which I described as belonging to the Equatorial Culture are so self evident to all the specialists in our science, whether they are my opponents or my friends, that I can put forward the same claim for their genuineness, as you willingly accord to the Egyptologists and the Assyriologists for their results.

When I look upon the letter as a whole, I get the impression, particularly from the second series of your attacks, that they are caused by the wish to remain undisturbed in your own views, and that before you yourself write on these subjects you are willing, to a certain extent, to break a staff over them, and to revoke a former friendship, in order to dispose of disturbing elements. Up to now we have recognized the right of our own way of looking at things, and of our own methods. That was the origin of our genuine friendship. But, after we have been separated for hardly two years, you feel called upon, in your letter of 8.1, to take up the position not of a critic, but of a condemning judge, towards me. You assert that you have formed your own opinion, and that you could prove your points, then you make statements none of which correspond to the facts (motor firms, film company, tourist routes).

Your second line of attack is based on literary material, which, certainly, is of decisive importance for the science of history, but by itself is of dubious value for classical antiquity, and fails for the purpose of ethnology and of pre-history.

From a standpoint at which you have arrived from a few years study of the *Real Lexicon*, and of ethnological literature, you

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word—the Gothic and the pyramid styles came into full being as suddenly as . . . the Roman Imperialism of Augustus, and Islam. Every being strides on to its fulfilment of epochs.

believe that you can straight away pass judgment, and an absolute and dictatorial one at that, upon me, after I have lived for thirty-five years in the material. . . .

Spengler to Andre Fauconnet[1]

15.3.27

Since I have got to know your book about my philosophy, it has been my wish to send you some words of thanks and recognition.

I will confess to you that among the mass of literature to which my work has given rise, nothing has appeared in Germany which is to be compared with your critique. So far as my knowledge goes, the same thing happened in the case of the philosophy of Nietzsche.

There is a quality of critical penetration, which is natural to the French mind, but which is completely lacking in the German. Great criticism is a domain which is altogether absent from our literature. Perhaps for works involving deep thought it is the other way round, for the great French novelists whom I love, like Zola, and above all Stendhal, are in the deepest foundation of their being critics, and not transformers, of the universe.

As regards your book, you will soon no doubt have the same experience which I have had in Germany, and am about to make in England: that the periwigs of the special branches of learning refuse with downright indignation to take serious notice of things of this kind. In such cases a number of years is necessary to bring these gentlemen to the degree of familiarity at which their thinking powers begin to work. One error I should like to correct for reasons which are important to me: I have not only stood aloof from the National Socialist movement which led to the Munich Putsch, but actually, unfortunately in vain, done my utmost to prevent it. My little lecture *The Political Duties of German Youth* was given on the day that the process against Hitler began. I am of the opinion that politics should be based on sober facts and considerations, and not on a romanticism of the feelings. Finally, it would be a great pleasure to me if I could send you one

[1] A professor at Poitiers.

of my works which you do not yet possess, or a photograph of myself. Will you tell me what you would like.

Andre Fauconnet to Spengler

Poitiers, 30.3.27

Your kind letter gave me great pleasure, and I thank you heartily for it. Should a photograph and handwriting now confirm what the keyboard of the typewriter has expressed less personally, the wall of my quiet study reflecting the first sun of spring would smile with pleasure at a present of such value to me.

As regards your tenets, my role has been a very modest one, more or less like that of an electrical transformer which converts too powerful a current to household use. And naturally I must not forget, for fear of storms, to earth the antennae.

I am a State official, and as a Frenchman am determined by my habitus, by space and time, but I rightly relied on you, you knew, as Schiller said, how to distinguish the man from his office (Picol. III, 2). At the next opportunity I will correct the error in question (regarding your political party). You know the erring voice responsible, a Herr O. Grantoff of Berlin, whom I do not know. But he did not outwit the 'old ape' in me, and my express reserve was, I see, a very expedient defence. It is plain that a good catalogue of your works and biographical material about you would best outshine these false wills o' the wisp in future. *Verum est enim index sui—et falsi.*

I was born in the neighbourhood of Paris in 1881. I live here with my elder 24-year-old daughter who represents my absent wife, in an old country house, the garden of which is enclosed by a genuine Roman wall. I read your marvellous book on a high terrace which looks out over the once world-famous old town. The sentiment was not forced. 'I write because I must! and because I must, so I am able to,' 'Autumn' wrote for me, otherwise life here is not inspiring; the modern town: a small provincial hole, any quantity of specialist and alas daily bread students, but no fellow workers. . . . What wonder that your letter, dear master, was a great 'joy' to me. Its magic restores what fashion had taken

away. As they sang yesterday from Langenburg, thanks to the wireless which was kind enough to drown for a time the choral symphony—culture—the frightful English jazz music—'civilization'.

Fritz Reck-Malleczewen to Spengler

Pasing, Munich, 15.4.27

I have got the following question to ask. A big Leipzig publisher, with whom since January I am under contract for all my production, is publishing through Dr Curt Thesing a very special collection of essays, the main points of which can be characterized as follows. Various well-known personalities are to give their views on their political or historical opponents. Thus Foch on Ludendorff (he has now agreed), or the Kaiser on Disraeli (negotiations with Doorn are in the air). Thesing wanted to propose that you should do a chapter on Luther or Leo XIV, about a sheet in length. As he does not know you, he has asked me to sound you. A task which I am performing herewith.

Spengler to August Albers

Rosstrappe, 19.5.27

To the cave dwellers and umbrella carriers a greeting from the sun-drenched slopes of the Harz.

Richard Korherr to Spengler

30.5.27

On my visit you gave me an idea which I ought to have had long ago, as it is appropriate to the whole essence of my work: the idea of fighting birth decline by converting the souls of our people to marriage and bringing up children. All measures for fighting birth decline have no meaning and no success, when one thing is lacking, namely: the change of feeling that the sort of marriage is once again regarded as reasonable and desirable in which the woman is regarded in the first instance as a mother. I think of the

Jews and the Indians, when every man strove to obtain a son to pay his funeral expenses, and particularly of China, where the idea has had such great success. Confucius and Mencius brought this about in opposition to Lao-Tsze and Taoism. The powerful influence of the moral teaching of Confucius can still be observed. The man who dies without descendants receives no social recognition among the living. For this China has only to thank the great spirit of a Confucius. In other cultures too men have arisen who demand this change of attitude, but they were not sufficiently outstanding minds to be victorious over the *panem et circenses* of their time.

Sehr geehrter Herr Dr Spengler! In the west too only an outstanding mind, a western Confucius, can achieve what is to be achieved. If lesser spirits try their hand at it and attempt, with the best will in the world, to save the German people, they will help very little and perhaps only cause harm, harm which cannot be remedied. The only personality to succeed in this gigantic task is you. . . .

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Munich, 6.6.27

I came very near to calling on you one day, for I had undertaken a trip to the Harz and thought I would go back by the aeroplane from Erfurt to Munich. The wet weather ruined the plan. I shall not be able to visit Munich in the near future, but I could certainly come to you in July. The air connection to Erfurt—in two hours—is very convenient. I should be delighted to discuss with you all manner of things which have been collecting in my mind, and among them are some future plans for the Nietzsche Archive. On the other hand forgive me if I have great inward and outward doubts about the idea of a Nietzsche week. There is a certain feeling of exclusiveness connected with the name of Nietzsche, not only his ideas, but also the memory of his personality, and the atmosphere which has been again newly created round it really by means of your quite individual life's work. If his name is to be brought again to the attention of the public, it

must be in a manner appropriate to this exclusiveness. But all these days and weeks have become a literary fashion: Steiner, Keyserling, Eucken, the Schutzbund, Germans in foreign countries, the Colonial movement, the debt question and any quantity more. Everywhere one sees the same people, hears in essence the same speeches, reads the same reports in the newspapers and at the most recent 'day' one has already forgotten the one before. Five years ago it was something new and might have produced better results for the Nietzsche Archive, than would be the case nowadays in Darmstadt or anywhere else. But nowadays when every ephemeral celebrity gets their 'day', I should not like to see the name of Nietzsche take his turn. If anything has to be done before long, it must be something new in form, and worthier and more exclusive and less literary. That is what I should like to discuss with you. Don't be cross with me because I am opposed to this idea. It is only because it sets your brother not at the top, but in an arbitrary place in a long list.

Edgar J. Jung[1] *to Spengler*

Munich, 14.6.27

The German Students Association informs me that on the occasion of the Tenth German Students' Day to be held in Wurzburg from July 16th to 20th, some important addresses will be delivered which will be of the nature of policy directives. As far as I know Othmar Spann, you and I myself, have been asked to speak. As you know, there is a special importance in this Tenth German Students Day, when also the memorial to fallen academicians will be unveiled, because the German Academic Movement is—national-politically—undergoing a severe crisis. The Board of the German Students Association therefore urges me again to press you under all circumstances to undertake the desired address, for which you were asked some weeks ago. . . .

[1] Jung was an adviser of Von Papen, and influenced his famous speech at Marburg which roused Hitler's resentment. Jung was murdered on 30.6.34 with many others on the pretext of a rebellion led by Röhm.—Tr.

Royo Villanova to Spengler

Saragossa, 22.6.27

The University of Saragossa intends to hold a festival in the third week of April in honour of the centenary of Goya's death. We would be much pleased and very much honoured if you would give a lecture on our painter in that week in Saragossa. If you assent, and if you speak in German, your speech would be translated into Spanish, printed and publicly distributed. We should be glad to know the honorarium that we should owe you, including the cost of travelling to Saragossa.

Alfred Jeremias to Spengler

Leipzig, 2.7.27

You kindly inquire about my *Handbook of old oriental Religious Culture*. It has been lying *nearly* finished for a long time. . . . The Jewish question has also taken a lot of time. Modern Jerusalem is raging because I do not recognize Reform Jewry. But the Martin Buber party harass me with their sympathy. The conferences in Budapest and Warsaw were of burning interest. In other countries there is a powerful movement for a future Jewish-Christianity. I am sending you an article from *Jews*. . . .

I shall soon send you my *Expectation of a Saviour* book, for which I earnestly entreat your attention on holidays. I am most anxious to know what the effect this material has upon you, and I am sure it will be as follows: the education of mankind is a uniform whole, of which religion is the core and the star; religion is a uniform whole, and the expectation of a Saviour is its core and its star. The constant recurrence of the idea shakes one. If you carried your metaphysics a stage higher and looked at things with the eye of God, as stood in your *first* edition,[1] you would be drawing very near to us. . . .

[1] The allusion is to a phrase in the introduction of the original edition of *The Decline* in July 1918.

Edouard Meyer to Spengler

Berlin-Lichterfelde, 26.7.27

I cannot accept the offer made to me by the publishing firm, A. Knopf, which you support. Quite apart from the fact that I would never again write anything for America—for America is, as being chiefly responsible for our condition, with its intrinsic mendacity and unctuous superiority, to me the most repugnant of our enemies—I must reserve my time for my chief work, and at my age I cannot permit myself to follow any bypaths, if I still want to bring anything to a conclusion. . . .

Ludwig Kastl to Paul Reusch

Berlin W10, 11.8.27

I am grateful to you for sending me Herr Dr Spengler's extremely interesting remarks on legal education and the previous method of treating legal history. I believe that Dr Spengler is right that for the purpose of legal education and for legislation a comprehensive picture is required of the legal history of the West for the last 2,000 years.

It would be an excellent idea if Herr Spengler could draw up a draft of the text of the competition which is to be publicized, on the receipt of which we can then discuss the matter officially, in order in this way to raise the necessary funds. The discussion in the board would be most convenient in the first sitting of the winter months.

Spengler to Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche

Munich, 3.10.27

. . . What you write about Klages coincides entirely with my opinion. He is basically a real professor and wishes to reduce Nietzsche to a level from which he can represent him as his own predecessor. Lastly it is a misunderstanding of Nietzsche's work, if one sees nothing in it except a system of psychology. Unfortunately that is also, so far as I can see, the standpoint of

Prinzhorn, who approves thoroughly and supports Klages' view. Now you must yourself decide whether this occasion under these circumstances can fulfil its purpose or not, for Wurzbach's lecture, to judge from the title, is a sort of enthusiastic festival speech without real content. As I have said, I will come if you wish, but I do not think that it is in the interests of Nietzsche if the celebration takes place under these circumstances . . . perhaps you will find also that it is better to gain time by postponement. It may be possible to find a form which has a less popular aspect. You know that I am only writing this because, in the interests of what is associated with the name of Nietzsche, I should like to avoid anything which might put him on a level with names like Steiner, Keyserling, etc.

NOTE: On 17.7.27 Spengler was attacked by a cerebral haemorrhage from which he never fully recovered as it brought a chain of maladies in its wake. As a result he never summoned the strength to carry out a major work, and the bundles of notes for *Urfragen* and *Urgeschichte* remained in his desk.

Spengler to August Albers

Rome, 8.11.27

Continuing summer atmosphere, warm, cloudless. Everything is wonderful. Many thanks for your letter.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 19.11.27

I am coming with a request to you today on behalf of a poor fellow, whom I do not know myself, but who was crippled in the war and has no means to pay for medical treatment. I enclose all his letters by way of explanation. You will see from these that he applied in vain to the authorities through the Crown Prince of Bavaria. I should like to get some funds for him, a lump sum for a thorough treatment. If you can do anything in this matter, please send the amount to Herr F. himself or to me. You would be doing me a great personal favour, for I am very sorry for the poor fellow. If anything further is to be done or altered regarding

the competition [letter of 10.11], I am now again permanently in Munich. I will write to you from Rome if I have anything of interest to relate.

Spengler to Richard Korherr

Munich, 28.11.27

I have sent a little introduction to the *Suddeutsche Monatshefte*, which I have kept as short as possible, because in fact there is nothing to be added to what you have written. I wish to take the opportunity of saying that you have done a most excellent piece of work, and I trust that it will have its effect. I would advise you to work up the whole again into book form, and to bring in still more statistical information from the sources with which as I see you are familiar. If you come to Munich again, we could discuss the matter.

Paul von Sokolewski to Spengler

4.12.27

Unfortunately I have not met you personally, as I wanted before I left Munich to greet you and at the same time to introduce a friend and fellow countryman, Freiherr Edouard von Stäckelburg-Sutlem, who would like to discuss some Baltic questions with you. Those two sinister worthies whom you know, Köster and Schiemann, together with the left Social Democrats now in control of the Government in Lettland, have concluded a commercial treaty with the Soviets, and thereby handed over the country freed by us back to Communism and its trading establishments. Distant and powerful England has broken off its very important trade connections with Russia because it could not control the work of agitators in these so-called trading establishments. You can imagine to what state Lettland, as a neighbour of Russia, is reduced. The prestige of Germany has thereby suffered frightfully in the border states. When the German envoy turns out to be a Communist agent, it gives foundation to a pronounced fear, particularly in Finland, that Germany by the Treaty of Rapallo

has already sacrificed it to the Communists. Since Finland has been freed by German arms, that would be dishonourable on the part of Germany. English influence is steadily increasing there, and what is there remaining to the border states, which under no circumstances wish to return to Russia, than to turn away from the German side as quite unreliable? An insuperable barrier, which the Allies made such efforts to establish, is then created between Germany and Russia. And what is the German people going to do, if it is going to be throttled on the East also? It appears that we are not conscious of the seriousness of the situation. A close relationship with Russia does not exclude the possibility of exercising restraint towards the Communism at present dominant there, and upholding our interests by maintaining the integrity of the border states from Communistic influences. The Russians, who in fact cannot exist in the future without the Germans, will understand this perfectly. The Russian is very tolerant if he encounters a firm and cleverly conducted, and at the same time well intentioned, policy.

Forgive my outburst, but as a confirmed eastern patriot I am full of anxiety. You have a sharp eye for the importance of the problem, and will sympathize with my worry. If one is rooted in the soil, one is particularly sensitive.

1928

Spengler to Hans Erich Stier

25.1.28

I have read your dissertation which you kindly sent me with the greatest interest. On some individual points I do altogether agree, I cannot go into the matter within the compass of a letter; but I would advise you, when you carry out your plan, as I hope you will, for a history of political thought of the Greeks and Romans, to use as little as possible the catchwords of the present time. By monarchy today we mean the form of State which has developed from feudalism to the recognition of a legitimate dynasty, and which still very clearly bears the marks of its past, even when the representation of the different orders has given place to an elected parliament. Of this form there is no idea in classical history of your period. Then it was a question of a form resembling the empire of Napoleon, when one thinks of this as the opposite to the kingdom of the Bourbons. I would use the expression Tyrannis for the earlier form of this kind, and for the later form (Alexander) I would choose the expression Hellenistic kingdom or something of the sort.

I do not know when I shall next come to Berlin. If I do I should be delighted to become acquainted with your works on ancient Mexico. In view of the frightful dilettantism on this subject in particular, and the dubious value of the literature about it, it is high time that some sound work on the subject should appear. . . .

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 26.2.28

The season is too far advanced this time for a journey to Egypt. Most of the hotels south of Cairo close in April, so up to March

10th there was no certain booking on a steamer . . . the best time is from January to the middle of March. I must therefore confine myself to thanking you very heartily for your kindly intentions.

I shall go probably in the middle or the end of March to Provence, perhaps also to East and South Spain and the Balearics on account of the prehistoric finds. But again many thanks.

Roderick Schlubach to Spengler

12.3.28

The situation in Germany makes me ponder a great deal. Again and again the lack of natural leaders becomes noticeable. I cudgel my brains as to what it is to be attributed that Germany at this time produces so few natural leaders. It cannot only be due to our parliamentary system. There must be other reasons. I am certain that in many circles in Germany, and particularly in the leading ones, there is no proper understanding of the general position. People are only interested in parish pump affairs, and the force is lacking to introduce a strong direction into our politics. I often ask myself why we can find no 'Mussolini' in Germany. Perhaps you will be able to answer this question, particularly as recently you have so often stayed in Rome.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 20.3.28

I have just received your letter. Heartiest thanks. I am very sorry that you feel seriously ill. May I venture to remind you that your life is essential to Germany? You should take your own good advice to heart for yourself and take an Easter trip. Could we not meet on Easter Monday in Sevilla? Or a littler earlier at Carcassone on the northern slope of the Pyrenees? You can spare that much time from your work. I am here till the 24th. Many thanks and a good recovery! And—I hope—auf wiedersehen in Sevilla!

Spengler to August Albers

Avignon, 4.4.28

Up here, where Petrarch lived, lies a Roman Amphitheatre, behind Mont Ventoux covered with snow. A splendid spring.

NOTE: On his way to Avignon he spent a night with the Quesada family, and related to them the outline of his proposed 'Primal-questions'.

Spengler to August Albers

Toledo, 13.4.28

Hearty greetings from ruined Toledo. It is sad about the Moorish culture!

Sevilla, 16.4.28

It is good to be here, warm, sunny, the Moors, bullfights, handsome people.

Granada, 21.4.28

Wonderful Granada, below palms, churches, gypsies, flowers, above the Alhambra (200 m. higher), over all the wonderful snow carpet of the Sierra Nevada (3,600 m.).

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Alhambra, 21.4.28

Granada is beautiful beyond all description. Facing Albaicin lies the Alhambra (a mountain) in front of the dazzlingly white Sierra Nevada. I could live here.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Granada, 24.4.28

Here every day pleases me better. Sun, magnificent scenery, splendid Moorish art. In the Alhambra park thousands of nightingales sing—the only music which I have heard so far.

Müldner von Mulnheim to Spengler

Berlin, 24.4.28

Today I beg leave to put the following before you. I am very glad to have this opportunity of getting in touch with you, after we have not met for such a long time. Her Majesty the Empress Hermine intends to make a stay of some weeks from May 5th to 31st at the Hotel Kurhaus, Bad Kissingen. The exalted lady has expressed a wish to meet, when the opportunity arises, a small number of influential and leading personalities from different spheres of interest, as she used to in Berlin. I have all the more gladly acceded to this wish of the exalted lady, as I consider it to be specially important and valuable, if Empress Hermine in the course of her temporary stay in Germany sees the right people and thus obtains an insight into our actual conditions in Germany. As the Empress is particularly anxious to get to know leading and influential intellectual personalities in Germany, I venture to put the request to you, honoured Dr Spengler, to come to Kissingen on this occasion. I know that my request is somewhat presumptuous. But I venture to hope that nevertheless you will make it possible. Perhaps you will be good enough to let me know what day would suit you. I would then report to Doorn, and you only need to arrive in Kissingen on the day arranged and perhaps to inquire at what time in the afternoon the exalted lady is expecting you. I do not think, but cannot say for certain, that the Empress Hermine, on account of her cure, will be able to extend the reception beyond the limits of an afternoon's visit. Now please, honoured Dr Spengler, do not take offence at a quite candid request, namely, that you will inform me of your willingness to allow me to refund to you the expenses of the journey. In any case it is my duty to put this request before you. . . .

Spengler to Edouard Meyer

Munich, 18.5.28

On my return from Spain I found your second volume, for which I thank you very much. I have read it straight off and without intermission and wish you luck for this magnificent epitomization

of the historical events of a difficult period. The attempts of Bilabel and Weber have shown how difficult it must be, and also the degree of your success. In Spain I received an ever firmer impression that a great deal in the Eastern Mediterranean derives from the coasts of the western. A number of details in cult, grave formation, dress, weapons, layout of houses, etc., has been preserved here from Neolithic times up to the present day, so that comparisons are perfectly possible. For instance, the present Andalusian female dress is found in every detail in the Iberian votive statues, a number of symbols of the Madonna cult of today are on the Tanit statues of Punic shrines. Since the war three Iberian pilgrimage sites (sixth century, East Coast) have been dug out with innumerable votive gifts, among them hundreds of figures of warriors, obviously offered by mercenaries for booty and a safe return home, their arms resembling those of the sea-peoples (still unpublished). In relation to house building, present day patios are exactly similar to those of the Moors, Romans, Punic peoples, and the Neolithic inhabitants, and remind me again of the ground plan of the Cretan palace. I have discussed these questions with Professor Obermaier. Your name was often mentioned in this connection. Obermaier gave me for you a short description of the treasures at Aliceda which I forward herewith. I think that we must reckon with quite considerable invasions in the second millennium from Spain and North Africa to the islands of Sardinia and Sicily as far as Cyprus. . . . Today I am convinced that the builders of the Mycenean domegraves also come from Libya and that there is a considerable degree of truth in the classical tradition of their origin mentioned by Herodotus. Paul Borchardt has taken a sample grave, and at the spot where he guesses the great city to have been, he found porcelain which is unknown to the directors of the Museum in Tunis. I advised him strongly, instead of raising this question further in articles, to carry out systematic digging with a few experts, for which he is now trying to raise funds. I have a feeling that a discovery might be made here which would be contemporary with those at Troy, Knossos and Boghazköi. The town and its hinterland must have perished at the turn of the second to the first millennium,

presumably in connection with the advancing drying up of these areas. . . .

Edouard Meyer to Spengler

Berlin-Lichterfelde, 29.5.28

Many thanks for sending me Professor Obermaier's report on the treasure of Aliceda. The most interesting objects (including a glass jar with a pseudo-Egyptian inscription, the Phoenicians having followed the same method as our manufacturers do with imitations of Egyptian and Chinese goods) show by their ornaments and representations that there was no more an independent art in Spain than among the Phoenicians, but that the motives were borrowed from everywhere and automatically combined.

I must confess that I am extremely sceptical in regard to your remarks about a Spanish influence in the second millennium, also as to the greater part of Schuchhardt's hypotheses about western influences in house building and specially the more than problematical evaluation of the buildings at Malta. I see absolutely no reason why the Cretan culture in its essence (apart from Egyptian influence and the northern motive from over the Aegean) should not have been autochthonous and developed on the island. I am quite unable to believe that Africa played an important part in development of its cultural history, nor do I believe therefore in the derivation of old Cretan culture from North Africa put forward by Evans. Single motives in ornamentation have at all times spread from one direction or the other, but that is not decisive, only what a people capable of culture, which takes them over, has independently made out of them. Thus the spread of tobacco, potatoes, coffee, and tea in no way shows that the Americans or the relevant eastern peoples have exercized a cultural influence since the sixteenth century. . . . I am quite horrified by Borchardt's work. Without hesitation he attaches importance to one of the most miserable compilations of late Hellenistic literature, Diodorus' extract from the mythological romance of Dionysius Skytobrachion. . . in the same way as Hermann he

argues from Plato's Atlantis (why he does not quote Swift's Republic of Laputa or Pantagruel, etc., I do not know). . . .

Richard Korherr to Spengler

Regensburg, 23.5.28

As until yesterday nothing of importance had eventuated in my affairs, for the last few months I have not wished to bother you any more. Also you were away for some time. However, yesterday something happened of which I must certainly inform you. I was asked to call on the Italian diplomatic representative and General Consul . . . in Munich, and learnt that Mussolini desired my permission for he himself to translate my article 'Birth Decline' in the *Suddeutsche Monatshefte*, and to add a foreword. I have granted permission. So far as I can gather, Mussolini will presumably request you to allow your introduction to be retained. Full of this news, I waited in front of your flat, but finally did not dare to announce myself, as I had not given previous notice. May I ask you whether I can pay an early visit to ask you for your advice, for which I am so very grateful, and to make some requests.

Karl Kindermann to Spengler

Durlach i. Baden, 6.6.28

Perhaps you recollect my journey to the Soviet Union which turned out so tragically, and when you so kindly gave me your book *The Decline of the West*! The result of this study journey was the well-known German student case which ended with a triple death sentence. You asked me at that time for a report. It would be quite impossible for me in a few lines to describe a two-year stay in the cellars of the Moscow Cheka. I have written about it often in the Press, and if you wish I would willingly give you further information. Today I should like only to call to mind the memory of a Russian officer, probably shot long since, by name Iwan Iwanowitsch Werchejew, who, together with me, was awaiting execution. We often talked about your ideas. W. was an

enthusiastic follower of your theories. When in January 1925 he was led out—presumably—to execution—he had often carried out a hunger strike in order to hasten on his execution—he embraced and kissed me in the Russian manner, and said only '*Ave Germania, morituri te salutant.* Give my regards to Oswald Spengler.'

I have experienced a great deal, but this little scene remains always unforgettable. I permit myself finally to convey to you the last greeting of this innocent man, murdered because of his membership of the one time army of the Czar. Fatalism withstood the test, even in so horrible a place as the Moscow Lubjanka. The poor man died calmly, so I can well believe.

NOTE: Kindermann and two other German students were arrested in 1924 on a charge of industrial espionage and intending to murder Soviet leaders, and condemned to death. On the intervention of the German Government the sentences were commuted to ten years imprisonment; they were released in 1927.

Spengler to Edouard Meyer

Munich, 30.6.28

I regret that you reject the connections between the western Mediterranean and the Aegean. The general position is that fifty years ago the 'classical world' was treated as a separate unit, then the connections with the south-eastern Mediterranean appeared, twenty-five years ago the connections with southern Russia and central Europe, and finally today those with the West, become visible. George Wilke, Oswald Menghin and Peet indicated this before the war and tried to describe the links more exactly. Today, in my opinion, it can be seen much more clearly. The beehive-like building under the palace of Knossos is, in this connection, a discovery of the first rank. On the other hand it is claimed that there have been Minoic finds in Tunis. Köster's book about sea traffic in the Mediterranean is unfortunately one-sided. There was a fully developed sea traffic in the fourth millennium from Scandinavia and Ireland by way of Gibraltar to the eastern Mediterranean; the correspondences found in the Neolithic centres prove this with certainty. Along this route (the Norman route)

there was a stream of Nordic folk-elements into the Mediterranean. If there is a mention of North-African culture radiating out to Crete and far beyond, it is a reference to elements which probably came from Spain. The resemblances today, however, are so numerous, that I agree with Menghin when he places the African influences in the Cretan Neolithic far above the Nordic and the Middle Eastern. Such an intensive influence is not possible without some connecting centres and when one considers the whole geographical position, Tunis, which since the Capsians[1] has been the centre of gravity of a large area, seems the most suitable. As moreover it was the natural distribution centre for the communications between Crete or Egypt and Spain, it must also in early times have had political importance. It is quite clear that the Phoenicians, when they founded Carthage, in reality only annexed a very old trading centre, and did not, as it were, found a new one. Also the old Greek sagas contain so many motives which have a bearing on the old association with this area, that there must be a connection with the Minos saga. But quite apart from the late Greek and Roman writings, there are plenty of others before Herodotus. The sea-people's invasion proves, that in the operations against Egypt, besides a military base in the East, say Cyprus, there must also have been one in the west. If the Aquaivascha were really circumcized, like all North Africans, it seems to me most probable that they brought the name from there to both the districts called Achaea, as the Philistines did in Canaan, and that part of the Homeric names and myths derive from there. This movement must have continued throughout the third and second millenniums without intermission, because the conditions of life with the advance of the desert in North Africa became more and more unbearable. I consider it possible that about the time of Homer the trading centre in Tunis perished like the towns now discovered in East Turkistan. Anyhow only excavation can decide this point. The clues in the Greek saga are however clear enough to justify an experiment. I should be delighted therefore if Borchardt, instead of his dilettante studies of Greek sources, would

[1] Capsian—'North African corresponding stage to the European Aurignacian, late palaeolithic.'

make his experimental digging systematic, which is in reality a question of money. Also I do not think it is impossible that a language will be discovered in Asia Minor which will be related to the Libyan. For ceramics, figures of idols, and grave-forms, of African type, can be followed as far as East Bulgaria, and also, so far as I can see, are indicated in the lower layers of Troy. All this lay naturally outside the political and commercial horizon of the Egyptians, so that one gets the impression from their inscriptions that beyond Crete and Cyrene the world came to an end. But at the eastern end of the great prehistoric marine traffic road—Gibraltar–Tunis–Crete–Asia Minor—lies Cyprus, in whose speech form the North African and the Spanish element is very clearly marked. They are the two copper countries, in one of which probably the production of bronze was discovered.

I should like to discuss these things with you. Perhaps in the course of the year I will come to Berlin. Please remember me to your lady wife.

Alfred Jeremias to Spengler

Leipzig, 4.8.28

. . . You once told me: if ever my religious stuff comes out of the drawer of my writing table, you will be satisfied with me, as much as you can expect to be from a north German new-Protestant.[1] Your view of Luther is that of the intellectual Protestantism,

[1] Many of the German Protestant theologians took a favourable view of Spengler.

Spengler wrote: 'In the first stage of a culture the world terror (of the Holy God) and the world longing (for the living God) are expressed in the phrase "to fear and love God". When the last stage of a culture announces itself, the doubt of God begins as a symptom of old age, that is to say the overlaying and suppressing of the "astrological" world aspect by the mathematical and physical.' Girgensohn refers to the anti-rationalistic attitude of Spengler and his insistence on soul–individuality–destiny. Heim wrote: 'The negative pole (in Spengler) is the achievement of Copernicus, the freeing of the science of history from the barrier of perspective, from the fortuitous standpoint of the human observer.' It is the sceptical relative 'historicism'. The positive pole is the idea of destiny, the discovery of a new aspect of reality, entirely opposed to the causal-mechanical picture of the world; the attempt to put this living, organic, poetic-artistic world picture not only on the same level as the causal, mechanical, world picture, but to subordinate the latter to it.

which only sees the criticism but not the primal Christian new creation. I do not think much of it. The rejection of dogmas is understandable when one thinks of phrases taught by a crammer. They have in fact been misused for that purpose in an unfortunate theological development, which has made a compulsory belief out of primitive Christianity's desire for knowledge. In origin they are a summarized formulation of the religious experiences of the community—under the high pressure of religious experience (that you exclude this experience from history is our most important point of disagreement). For me world history is not this but a *world judgment*. It is unfortunate that dogma had to be or must be surrendered to pedagogic clumsiness, because it is unavoidable for essential Christian teaching. The Christian science of life, which is unthinkable without Christian teaching, without dogma becomes nonsense. The experience of the community still lacks full experience under the item Church. That is our present position. Eschatological 'dogmas' can never exist in a binding form, because the experience must always be lacking—until it has actually fulfilled itself. Where the personality of the teacher is itself the method, the dogmas can do no harm. Christianity is life, not a theory.

I am distressed that you cut out the 'great personalities'. Hammurabi knew of this when he had the great introductory liturgy to his codex written in honour of the ancient Sumerian priestly cities, which were to him what 'eternal Rome' is to a modern savant. On one point you agreed with my thesis: the surprising

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Spengler insisted on justifying 'Macht-Politik' by divorcing politics from religion. In Spengler's description of the trial of Jesus, Pilate asks: 'What is truth?' Jesus replies by implication 'What is actuality?' 'My kingdom is not of this world.' 'This is the final word which admits of no gloss. A statesman can be deeply religious, a pious man can die for his country, but they must both know on which side they are really standing. No faith yet has altered the world, and no fact can rebut a faith. There is no bridge between directional time and timeless eternity, between the *course* of history and the existence of a divine world-order.'

Goethe remarked apropos of the death of Byron: 'The idea always appears as a strange guest in actuality. It is a misfortune when men rich in ideas try to realize them. It won't do. The idea and common actuality must be kept strictly separate.' —Tr.

spread of Sumerian symbolism is explained by the fact that commercial life, in contradiction to Egypt, was in the form of private enterprise, conducted by priests. Every commercial traveller in the third millennium from Sumeria was a priest, so that through these journeys, for which for example the site of London was already a transhipping port, a sort of international priesthood was formed.

Everything in spiritual culture starts with personalities, also the systemization of 'world-feeling', and the systemization was already complete, as the Darwin of world history, Schneider, states in his *Babylonian Thought*, when the Akkadians became conquerors. The priesthood remained Sumerian. They played the same part for the Akkadians as the Greeks did for the formation of Roman culture. The only memorial of the great Sargon (who should be placed about 2700–2800 B.C., not 2500 B.C., as many now say) shows a Sumerian as umbrella bearer. The Sargon period is in your morphological sense completely baroque. The lists of gods about 3000 B.C. are already scholastic. Now, through the recent digs in Ur (and perhaps Kisch) we have got a glimpse into the actual Sumerian gothic. Urnica, etc., so far as writing and practical culture are concerned is thus decadence. While here also, for the feeling of life in death resting on a wonderful sentiment belonging to the primitive world—death is nothing, and having to die with the king is certainly a will to die with him (which is shown by the position of the corpses, the harper with his twelve-stringed golden harp in the playing position)—is substituted in later burials by mourning and weeping, a sign of Semitic invasion.

The English reports are gradually getting clearer. The royal grave seems to have been plundered. According to the seals the queen is called Subadnin, the lady Schubad. Meschkalamdug according to the finds is a great man, not the king. (There were only vessels with his name and the silver ship.) In my opinion it is certain that it dates from a period earlier than Urnica, thus at least 3300 B.C. The rich gold treasures points to rich clients. The graves in Kisch, which Langdon found, judging from the well preserved cart wheels, were only worked in copper. The chalk relief of the carriages is certainly a representation of the funeral

procession. On top of the carriage a leopard skin. Perhaps the beasts are not mules, which the Berlin zoologists would like to know for certain, but a silver animal in front of the decorated royal carriage is quite certainly a mule, fourth millennium breed!

You know the ritual of the king's murder, as it was in India in the Hadramaut sagas, and until now actually in the Sudan. The four priests of the four quadrants of the district choose the king, as a fifth. He is killed on the altar of the mysteries decked for a festival. One finds them resting happily, only wishing that their rites may have a good influence on the sowing and the harvest. After their death they are visible as holy leopards. Therefore I find the leopard skin suggestive. Enough for today. Greetings from my household to yours.

Wilhelm Stapel to Spengler

Hamburg, 4.9.28

In the middle of August I wrote to you at the request of the Board and the business management of the Fichte Society, to inquire whether and under what conditions you would undertake to give a lecture at the meeting of the Fichte Society in Lübeck. We added the protocol of the meeting in Hanover last year. So far I have not received an answer.

Now it is well known that Spengler on principle never answers a letter. Perhaps you do the same as a painter I know, who only opens the letter box in front of his house about once a month when it is full—the box not the painter—and then he only opens the letters which fall directly into his hand, and leaves the others behind until the charwoman clears them away. Perhaps however it is your defence against the too numerous letters of the scribble loving Germans. I wish I could do the same. That does not however get round the necessity of my telling the Board whether Spengler says yes or no. Ergo, if you have not said 'yes' by letter, postcard or telegram before September 10th, I shall assume that you mean 'no'. By so doing I save you trouble and get the necessary information. You are to be envied!

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

12.9.28

For a long time I have left you in peace as I was under the impression that you were busy with your new work. On July 31st I was invited to a dinner-party by the Crown Princess to which various local friends of her husband were asked. The Crown Prince appeared later; he sat down near me. Naturally we fell at once into a political conversation, which, however, in the absence of a larger circle could not follow the desired course. Then the Prince said he would dine alone with me next evening for the sake of a tête-à-tête. I excused myself from holding conversations in the absence of witnesses. Afterwards on August 1st he dined with me in the presence of Fr. Cuno and Admiral von Karpf. The meal started at 9 o'clock and we got so deep in conversation that we did not rise from the table till half past three. The Prince wanted to continue the conversation on another occasion, as it had brought up a number of new points of view. I remarked that, in my opinion, the conversation should only be continued in the presence of you and Seldte (Stahthelm ed.). The Prince agreed.... Admiral von Karpf is a friend of mine, but I do not think very highly of his political views. I talked quite openly to the Crown Prince and found in him a very clear understanding. But one never knows on such occasions whether the meaning of what one says has been rightly understood.

Spengler to Roderich Schlubach

Munich, 21.9.28

Forgive me for only answering your letter today. I have been in hospital under observation for stomach trouble. I know now that an operation is not necessary, and that I can get over it with diet and medicine. Unfortunately I cannot manage the business on September 24th [dinner to meet Crown Prince]. Perhaps it might be possible at the beginning of October.

Spengler to Richard Korherr

Blankenburg, 5.10.28

Best wishes for the completion of the translation, you must take *energetic* steps to obtain your honorarium, otherwise, according to the custom of the country, some Fascist will put his hand in your pocket....

Peter Strawer to Spengler

Duisburg, 10.10.28

Now at last after seven years I have succeeded in obtaining a production, at least in parts, and in concert form of your–our opera *Diana's Wedding*. The performance will take place in the town concert hall at Duisburg on Sunday, September 21st, at 11.15 under my conductorship. Would you not like to be present? It is nothing of a journey by aeroplane from Munich, my wife and I would be delighted to see you again.

NOTE: Spengler had written the libretto for this opera, but told Strawer not to say anything about it.

Fritz Behn to Spengler

Munich, 9.11.28

Here is the cast of the porphyry bust. I hope it gives you as much pleasure as I obtained from the work on the original and from the original. It will interest you also that the Town gallery has bought the porphyry bust; it is a compliment to you and to me.

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

9.11.28

Many thanks for sending me the printed copy of your Dusseldorf speech.... After reading your speech I am more than ever of the opinion that we must make radical changes in German industry. In the present circumstances I see a further fermentation process, brought about by the need for change. I am curious as to which will carry his point, the employer or the worker.... But

let me tell you, dear Dr Spengler, that the first thing you must do now is to look after your health. . . . All the knowledge in the world is of no use without health. Allow me to convey this sincere request from my wife and myself, that before everything else you look after your health.

NOTE: Spengler's lecture was entitled 'The present relation between world economy and world politics'. He describes the influence of coal in causing enormous aggregations of population in industrial areas. 'In 1801 the population of Ireland was 6 million, and England 9 million; today (1926) Ireland has 4 million, and England 40 million inhabitants. By the congress of Vienna Belgium was made a province of Holland; today, as coal was found on the Belgian side of the boundary, the position is reversed. The problem for finding markets for the products of these industrial masses has not only caused frantic recurring efforts to increase industrial efficiency but efforts to find safe markets abroad. England has her empire. Russia is opening up Asia. What is Germany going to do?'—Tr.

Spengler to Richard Korherr

Munich, 29.11.28

Only today am I managing to answer your two letters and to thank you for a copy of the translation. I congratulate you on this great success. It will be of much advantage to your future career. Therefore you need not be too depressed about the deficiencies of your present employment in Berlin. Berlin today is the only town in Germany from which, in spite of the chatter about federalism, politics and commerce are directed, and you will learn a great deal there every day as an observer, which you would never notice in a lifetime in Bavaria. I advise you strongly to think more of Berlin, Hamburg, or the industrial areas, than of Munich, where boasting is in inverse proportion to actual importance. If you come to Munich on your Italian journey look me up again. I could give you some tips for Italy.

Spengler to Wolf Goetze

Munich, 12.12.28

I fear that in your work for your doctorate you are undertaking a venture, the dangers of which you are not yet quite aware. Your occupying yourself with me would be quite sufficient in the

case of a whole number of professors to bring about the candidate's failure. I have known several examples of this sort, and in some cases, which are altogether similar to yours, I have strongly advised against such a dangerous theme. Therefore inquire, with the necessary precautions, in order to make sure whether or not I am acceptable to the professors in question. If, contrary to expectations, you receive an affirmative reply, you can send me the outline of your work, and I will give you my advice as soon as I can. But I do not want the affair to be a sensational failure, of which you are completely guiltless, and of which I ought to have warned you.

Spengler to Roderich Schlubach

Munich, 12.12.28

I am sending you a confidential letter from the Director of the Persian National Bank, who would like to give appointments to a number of German bank officials in Persia, and asks me for names. You will see from the letter that it is an important matter and you will certainly be able to give me the names of some young gentlemen who are suitable and are willing to go to the East. Please treat the letter as confidential, and return it to me in due course. If you visit Roever again, remind him that he promised to let me know of one or two brands of cigars specially worthy of recommendation....

1929

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 14.4.29

Today my Haemoglobins count was 61 per cent. So I can travel I have got a prospectus from Brioni, expensive, obviously a fashionable hotel like in the Engadine, with polo matches, its own cinema! etc. Room with bath 70, Pension 40, with visitors' tax, tips, etc., 150 lire a day—33 marks. Is it worth it? I am going at the beginning of next week. I hope the weather will have improved. On Easter Monday snow fell in Venice. I hope you enjoy Karlsbad.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Brioni, 3.5.29

What is beautiful about Brioni is the sea. Then the walks. The coast path at least four hours hard going, over hills. Everywhere fields and thickets, innumerable birds, particularly nightingales, also red deer and roe deer. But no rowing boat, instead motor and sailing boats. No bathing beach, instead a little heated swimming pool in the hotel, four to seven in the afternoon, when the 'girls' and 'gentlemen' rollick around. I prefer a bath tub. Food: German hotel cooking, the whole staff is German. No fish baked in oil, because the visitors do not like it. Instead every third day Rhine salmon, roast with Universal sauce. There is only the hotel food, no restaurant.

Everybody plays polo, golf, tennis. In the evening *grande toilette*. One drinks coffee on the terrace where the piano player and the hotel gigolos immediately install themselves and jazzing goes on till dinner time. Afterwards the older visitors sit in the

hall and play patience, the young in the American bar and jazz. The public mostly Austrian, three-quarters German speaking, unpleasant. Among them Bernhard Shaw [*sic*], like an old village schoolmaster. He walks round all day with a famous American boxer, Tunney or something that sounds like that. Has he sought out the society of this idiotic mountain of flesh for recreation, or for a new play? For Albers, who cannot exist without society, there are no Swiss pastors.

Weather fine, evenings cool. I shall stay another week, then Rome.

Spengler to Hilde

Brioni (*after 3.5.29*)

Continuing fine weather. There is a Roman villa here (late empire) where I bake myself in the sun. I get right out of the way of the public, including Shaw and Richard Strauss. I shall stay here this week, then Rome.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Rome, 14.5.29

Just fetched your letter. It suits me so well here, that I shall hardly come back before the end of May. Stahlhelm day does not matter at all. This afternoon Ostia. Woolly lamb[1] suns himself in the lustre of beautiful speeches. In the background everybody curses. Greet Albers and Úz.[2]

Winifred Wagner to Spengler

Hans Wahnfried, 6.6.29

Hearty greetings from Bayreuth from your Knittels, Winifred Wagner who *really* has need of your book. Siegfried Wagner.

[1] Mussolini.
[2] Hilde's daughter.

Alfred Jeremias to Spengler

Leipzig, 18.7.29

Many thanks for your valuable letter. I will go into some of the points, though I should much prefer to discuss them verbally. 1. I am no Babylonian tower enthusiast, in the same way that the Egyptologues are pyramid enthusiasts. I am in no way fanatical about the popular Babylonian culture; moreover it is in essence entirely Sumerian, the Akkadians have impressed their lacrymose view of life, for example in Tamuz. . . . 2. Religious propaganda following trade routes. In the Golenischeff papyrus (about 1100 B.C.) the Egyptian ambassador says the doctrine of Ammon has been spread throughout the countries. . . . Sargon boasts that he has had deported peoples educated in the fear of God. Moreover in the reverse direction the religious influence of the Jews and Israelites since the eighth century was very powerful. At the time of Persian church reform under Artaxerxes Mnemon, information was sought at Berossos as to Babylonian cults. It is known that Anahita bears a resemblance to Ischtar. Images with healing powers were exchanged between Babylonia and Egypt. The Egyptians of the second millennium deliberately sent for Babylonian religious legends in order to acquire an irreproachable Babylonian. Adapa text and Eriskagal text were found in the King's archive at Amarna. These are only some examples which occur to me at once. How can you explain that the Nordic cosmogony is so closely related to the Sumerian that the best Nordic scholars have taken it for granted? I used to believe that the earliest Egyptians were dependant on Sumer. I have stated in my handbook of old oriental religion that before 2000 B.C., apart from some traders, that this was a geographical impossibility. But there is a relationship. I explain this relationship by the groups of ancient peoples coming from the south, which brought their own building stone, some of which came through the Persian gulf, the others through the Red Sea, the isthmus being no hindrance. Madonna. There is only one in the world, as there is only *one* Catholic Madonna. The Babylonians also have the same word—Madonna=Belti, *My* Lady. The point is the *Virgo paritura*, which is a Sumerian creation. Tamuz appeared under different

names. . . . The oldest Sumerian temples are Madonna temples. She is originally bi-sexual. The splitting off of the primal father is part of the mythology on which the cult is based.

Goethe had 'Sumerian intuition'.[1] *Himmelskräfte auf und nieder steigen*—the powers of Heaven wax and wane—is a fundamental Sumerian idea.

What a pity that you are not coming with me to Brittany. From what I have heard I have chosen Belle-Isle as a centre for getting easily to the megaliths. I have got a good measuring instrument. You could work in peace. I am doing the index for *The Old Testament in the light of the Ancient East.* With this book I am jumping on the face of the Faculty.

Knut Hamsun to Spengler

26.8.29

Best thanks for your amiable message signed with your famous name.

Spengler to Edouard Meyer

Munich, 1.12.29

. . . Moreover the Phoenicians have never had anything to say in the Aegean sea for the reason that the sea power on the west coast of Asia Minor, whether one calls it Ionian or Lydian, did not tolerate them north of Crete. There was much jealousy between the sea powers, the Ionians on one side, and the Carthaginians and the Etruscans on the other, also for the colonisation of the western Mediterranean, which has had the well-known results. If the Egyptian sea traffic apparently only went to Cyprus and Byblos, the cause was certainly due to the jealousy of the other power, which is hidden some way or other behind the name Kefti.[2] Also I am delighted that you dispose of the superstition about the great Tartessos in the pre-Grecian age. I do not believe at all that Tartessos was a definite town. As I said to you

[1] Faust, Part 1, Act 1, Sc. 1. Faust's monologue after he had seen the sign of the Macrocosmos.

[2] Kefti—name for pre-Hellenic Cretans.

once, the contrast between Alaschia and Tartessos in my opinion means the terms for east and west in the language of a seafaring people of the second millennium. The Greeks have preserved a scarcely understood memory in the terms Tartarus and Elysium in which the meaning, morning and evening or day and night, still shines through (Eileithya). Just as Alaschia originally represented certainly not the island, but also the adjacent mainland, so Tart became an indefinite term for the whole west. The ending essos was attached later by the other seafaring people, which possessed trading stations in the Black Sea before the Ionians (Odessus, Salmydessos). The two words mean no more than do Levante and Ponente for the Venetians.

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

6.12.29

You will probably be surprised that in the course of the year you have heard nothing of me. The steadily falling curve of our German economy has worried me more and more. As 'captain' I have considered it my duty to stay here in Hamburg the whole year with the exception of my customary treatment with Dengler in Baden-Baden, in order that by staying at the bridge I can at least influence the course of my own ship. It has not only been the case of a German crisis, but of a world crisis becoming increasingly visible, which unquestionably has been caused by the erroneous ideas of European so-called statesmen. . . . Secondly, I would like to take the opportunity to beg you to give a lecture under the auspices of the Patriotic Society, at whose head there is a young leader, Dr Diestel. Behind Dr Diestel there are other active young people, who fully understand the present decline, but are struggling against it. It would be splendid if a personality like you could say something impressive to the young people about the present time. . . . You will perhaps think it extraordinary that I should make such demands on you and your time and everything. Of course it is only a proposal, but I should be delighted if you would accept it. . . . But also the wish that today personalities like you would come forward and let your warning voice

be heard, not in a negative but a positive sense, has induced me to make this proposal. I consider it a very good thing that Dr Schacht should at last have stepped out of his reserve. It is not enough for a single personality to do this . . . we must not be reproached later for having watched the decline of the West without doing anything.

1930

Spengler to Roderich Schlubach

Munich, 12.1.30

In haste. So I will be in Hamburg on 3/2. The theme will be 'Germany in danger'.

Auf wiedersehen.

Arnold Otto Mayer to Spengler

Lovere on Lake Iseo, 8.4.30

Before I leave here I would like to thank you for your good advice. It was really very nice here, in spite of unfavourable weather. I saw the Adamello group today for the first time.

M. Tazerout to Spengler

La Roche, 25.6.30

A week ago I sent the completely translated first volume of your *Decline of the West* to the publishers Gallimard in Paris. I am now working diligently at the translation of the second volume, which I hope will appear not long after. I shall soon get the proofs of the first volume for correction. It would be a very great pleasure to me and Messrs Gallimard if you would write a *brief foreword for the French edition.* If you would state therein the fact which I have no hesitation in affirming that I am a *sincere supporter of your world view and your interpretation of history*, as you are well aware from our exchange of letters for the last two years, and our six-hour conversation last August, your introduction would then be a great honour for me, but also the *best means of spreading your thought* in French-speaking quarters.

As you know, I and Herr Gallimard are most gladly prepared for the translation of your next work about the pre-cultures. . . .

Spengler to Else Knittel

Munich, 7.9.30

As a result of not having time to deal with my post I have just received your card and letter and must unfortunately tell you that I cannot accept your kind invitation to Heiligenberg, although the tea party sounds very attractive. I am all the more sorry as I was anxious to discuss with your husband the questions about which we talked on the occasion of my last visit to the Festival House. A few days ago, as you no doubt are aware, a book was published by Bruckmann in Munich entitled *Richard Wagner, Sketches and rough drafts for the story of the Ring.* The book is far too dear to count on any circulation. Unfortunately the contents resemble most of what has emanated from Wahnfried since the time of Richard Wagner. It consists of the printing of notes and prose sketches, partly in facsimile. The necessary element of scholarship is lacking, which is made up for by plentiful use of the word *Master.* Also, the editor Strobel has quite forgotten to reproduce the private edition of the *Nibelungenring* of 1852.

It is unfortunate that the Wagner family have handed out valuable material without securing guarantees for its application. What is required today, a historical-critical edition of the entire poetic works, with a well-grounded introduction, has not been attempted at all, but is made more difficult by the appearance of this book with its printing of unpublished material.

NOTE: Baedeker reports: 'The house of Richard Wagner, Richard-Wagner-Strasse 48, built in 1873–4, bears the inscription *Hier wo mein Wähnen Frieden fand,* WAHNFRIED *sei dieses Haus von mir benannt.* Above is a graffito representing Wotan as a wanderer. In front of the house is a bust of King Ludwig II. Wagner (died 1883) is buried in the garden.'

Spengler is said to have owed his immunity from active persecution by Hitler (if he had lived a few years longer he might have found his way to a concentration camp) to his friendship with the Wagner family—Cosima, Winifred, and the others. Hitler is said to have been greatly struck by Winifred, the British-born wife of Siegfried Wagner. Shirer quotes Hitler speaking in a bunker on the

Eastern front. 'I remember my emotion on the day when I first entered Wahnfried. . . . I loved them all, and I loved Wahnfried. The ten days of the Bayreuth Festival were one of the blessed seasons of my existence. On the day following the end of the Festival I am gripped by a great sadness—as when one strips the Christmas tree of its ornaments.' 'Whoever wants to understand National Socialist Germany must know Wagner,' Hitler used to say.—Tr.

Spengler to Hans Erich Stier

Munich, 7.9.30

. . . The death of Edouard Meyer is all the more shattering because one sees from the entire Press that actually no one has realized his importance or taken any interest in what he has done. The death of any little tuppenny scholar, not to mention actors, boxers and criminals, would have made more impression. I feel indeed that at the Universities, on the whole, there was a sigh of relief that the man had disappeared, measured against whom, the work of others looked extremely small. I only wish you luck in your activities as a private tutor, and would willingly help you if you have difficulties with publishers regarding the printing of your work. . . . From my point of view, the theme is very important and decisive for the interpretation of classical history.

Spengler to August Albers

Ballensted, 22.10.30

Wonderful autumn days. The little raw food eaters in the bushes and on the trees send greetings to their colleague.

Spengler to Hans Erich Stier

Munich, 10.11.30

I thank you for your letter from which I have gathered the main points about the posthumous papers of E. Meyer. I hope it is possible to recover the general ideas of the lectures and the rest at least in an aphoristic form. Today especially a great deal is being written about questions of classical economy and constitutions, over and above the special questions, without the important associations between them being rightly observed. The

most important will be the lecture on general world history. I have always thought that Edouard Meyer would apply the results of his knowledge to the whole realm of history, and that one day he would write *the* authoritative book. If it is possible to assemble what is important in any sort of form the next generation would have had a picture of history which no other historian could give them. Even Ranke could not do it. What you say about the trivial formation of hypotheses in the science of history today is of course right. When a born specialist looks out over his fence, he always sees wonderful things. . . . I should like to write an article about the importance of Edouard Meyer for the scholarship of the present and the future, but in view of the terrible banality of our newspapers and magazines where could one publish it? The newspapers are only interested in feuilletons of 30–40 lines; learned magazines of general importance no longer exist, and the literary magazines have become advertisement organs for certain publishers. It is actually the case that one can no longer write essays, such as existed in quantities in the nineteenth century, unless one is willing to write them for oneself, without relying on getting them printed.

1931

Oscar von Müller to Spengler

Munich, 13.3.31

It was unanimously decided at a meeting of the Board of the Deutsches Museum to request you to become a member of the Administrative Committee of our Museum.

In case of your acceptance we will put forward the proposal at the next annual meeting on May 7th to elect you as a life member of the Committee. It would be a great pleasure and honour to greet you as a member of the governing body of the Deutsches Museum. . . .

Hugo Junkers to Spengler

Dessan, 10.4.31

Now that many years have passed since I had the great pleasure of being in touch with you, I am delighted that you have agreed to give a festival lecture at the coming general meeting of the Deutsches Museum on the subject of Culture and Technique.

Spengler to Helene Langewiesche

Munich, 30.4.31

Herr Albers writes that he is going over for your birthday on Sunday. I hope the weather soon permits a tour on the Benedictine Wand;[1] it is a long time since I have put on my nailed boots.

[1] A mountain, 5,910 feet high, about forty miles south of Munich.—Tr.

Fritz Behn to Spengler

Munich, 7.5.31

Yesterday was a great day, your allies are very grateful to you. But I ought to say 'the rebels'—for the present 'legitimates' are now the standard of value. Some understood nothing, some slept, some were thrilled. Held went fast asleep. In the evening I met a reasonable 'important personage', whom I knew. I asked him 'What did you think of the speech?' He said: 'thrilling'. 'And the general impression?' 'Miserable—they are furious.' Most of them glad that 'Schacht has saved the situation'—with his skittle alley speech. In the evening I was at the Kolbenheyer piece, a continuation of your lecture.[1] The whole Deutsches Museum should have been invited. I shall never forget yesterday.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 30.6.31

Here are the last proof sheets. The book will presumably be ready next week. I wish you would approach the Deutsches Museum, because I should like to send copies to a number of people, if the Deutsches Museum confines itself to announcing in the annual report that the book has appeared. I am sending you an extract from a small Munich paper, because it deals with a matter

[1] The subject of the lecture was 'Man and Technics', subsequently printed. It has been translated into English. The main conclusion of *Man and Technics* is that 'the mechanization of the world has entered a phase of highly dangerous over-tension. The picture of the earth with its plants, animals, and men has altered. In a few decades most of the great forests have gone to be turned into newsprint. Innumerable animal species have been extinguished. All things organic are dying in the grip of organization. The machine is a symbol, a spiritual and intellectual, but not a vital necessity.'

Spengler regards 'The Vikings of the mind' as a danger to humanity. 'The passion of the inventor has nothing whatever to do with the consequences of his invention. It is his personal life motive, his joy, and his sorrow. Whether his discovery is useful or menacing, creative or destructive, he cares not a jot. The masses are merely spectators of the event, but must take the consequences, whatever they may be.'

He thinks, however, that a change is gradually taking place. 'The Faustian thought begins to be sick of machines. A weariness is spreading, a sort of pacifism in the battle with Nature.'—Tr.

in which I have again been annoyed by the mendacity of the MNN. This Moenius is a Catholic priest who strikes out in his paper against everything which is called Germany and German, praises the Treaty of Versailles as a just punishment and in this case has published an offensive article about the occupation of the Ruhr and Schlageter. The decision of the Academy senate was unanimous and has been published by the Rectorate of the University. It was in all the newspapers, only the MNN have flatly suppressed it. This is part of the policy which only recognizes the Vatican and Bavarian particularism, and to which Germany is only a means and a purpose, and otherwise of no interest. It is noteworthy that the archbishop's ordinariat, in spite of various motions in the Landtag and the town council, calmly allows this Moenius to go on writing, while on the other side it ignores or opposes every national action, for example the Stahlhelm day, and lets fly at the National Socialists....

Hans Erich Stier to Spengler

Berlin-Lichterfelde, 12.7.31

Thank you for your latest publication and above all I wish to express my pleasure that your writing activity continues. I knew that you were busy at a greater work, of which your new booklet gives indications. I feel that the misunderstanding of your thoughts will be made much easier than in your earlier works. The brevity necessitates everything being too pregnantly formulated. It is not only thought which convinces, but the factual material which is brought forward. Particularly in the conclusion of your book this seems to me in an inadequate proportion. . . . Is optimism cowardice? You mean naturally that well-known habit of coming to terms with life's tasks with the words 'it will be all right'. But your formulation is open to misunderstanding. If there is such a thing as courage, it is seeing an escape from every situation. How *comfortable* it is to remain inactive in a 'lost' position (when is it lost? when one admits the fact!) and allows oneself to be pervaded by tragic thoughts. The poet rightly awards the palm, in

that small band of sleeping warriors encircled by the enemy and dreaming of their heroic death on the morrow and their subsequent fame, etc., to the one who inspects the enemy position and prepares for a breakthrough. And one hopes that the fear of disciplinary penalties and an underestimation of the danger had not at least an equal share with the devotion to duty of the Pompeian soldier. . . . It is always a question of winning, and not of perishing with honour; who can say when one perishes with honour, and when with dishonour? Honour should not be talked about until *everything* has been tried which can lead to victory, to maintaining one's ground. You said that yourself in *Pessimism*, when you spoke of the Anglo-Saxon interpretation of existence. So I must ask you: what practical effect do you expect by laying such stress on the hopelessness of everything? It is a question of hitting at the roots of the current ideologies. But cannot that be done simply in Nietzsche's manner, by looking at their reverse sides and examining point after point? It is not a question of pessimism and optimism, but of *laisser aller* and energetic interference.

I was very much interested to learn that you consider world history to a certain extent ending with our culture and expect only an 'exhausted straggler' in a *conditionally* possible 'Russian' culture (was it only an eventuality in vol. II of *The Decline*?) . . . Are all great cultures equally defeats? But does that not suggest the idea of a man who sees in life, above all, that it comes to an end? Is *memento mori* not a scolding priestly wisdom? And now to something very important, as I believe: is it not characteristic of the sentimental present day that it always scents, or rather presupposes the uselessness of effort, and does not dare to take the field against crime and the like? Is it not the ideologists who are prepared to call action 'vain' and prefer to flee to Utopias? Nobody has considered his life a defeat (even your hated priests and saints) because death stands over it. If whole races and landscapes have been consumed in the history of a culture, that goes to show that the purpose of history does not lie in their *retention* but beyond them. Surely we cannot lay down the law that there is no purpose? Or satisfy ourselves with the paradox that the meaning is meaninglessness? Meaning then is what *we* regard as such—it

would be an extremely retrograde step if the common sense of the Philistines is to be regarded as the measures of world happenings. Is this the case? Your definition of materialism, Bentham's theory, the observations about prehistorical research, the development of mankind, speech, are brilliant, particularly prehistoric technique, and very much else, which is extremely inspiring for anyone who pays attention to the problem of world history. Again you call attention to how much we consider without examination as proved, which cannot lay claim even to be regarded as a working hypothesis. . . . I have the highest hopes of your expected extensive work. Your latest book contains actually a number of theses. Conscious of the role of such theses, namely to invite argument, I have taken the liberty of saying what I think in reply, and I am grateful to you for reviving discussion. The age which communicated intellectually through theses was more fortunate than we of the present day, who write books and are 'reviewed'.

F. Neubauer to Spengler

Cassel, 20.7.31

You have again sent me your new book and give me an extreme pleasure by this proof of your kind memories of a time which is more than thirty years back. Dr Klop, who took the leaving examination about the same time as you, has just sent me a book by him and two others on the subject of Rheinish-Westphalian economy, he wrote me a nice letter. It means something for me at my age and in my self-chosen retirement in a suburb of Cassel, when men like you two remember my teaching in this way. Your book, so rich in thought, which depicts so convincingly and from such a height of vision the dangers before which our so-called culture stands, I have read with the greatest interest and I shall immediately read it again. Certainly optimism would be cowardice—even when one perceives that special reasons are responsible for the present crisis, it remains true that a dark cloud is hanging over the future of European culture. I should not like to pass over in silence that many other things separate me from your

view of the world: I believe that the social instincts in man are just as primary as the 'Beast of Prey' instinct; I do not believe that scepticism is the mental attitude incumbent on our age. I believe that the sceptical attitude corrupts a manly, cheerful, tense, will, from which mankind's greatest deeds have arisen. But this only by the way....

Spengler to F. Neubauer

I was delighted to receive a letter from you in your own handwriting, and to learn that you are well and still thinking of activity in the field of history. I thank you for the book which was particularly valuable to me as a fruit of your work. It is natural that you should not approve of various points in my view of the world. I am all the more glad you are able to agree with me in essence.

Your grateful scholar,

NOTE: Spengler on old-fashioned school masters: 'The late lamented master of Arts with his shabby coat and head full of Horace could inspire respect, but only in an age when there were no motors and aeroplanes.'—Tr.

Herrmann Beyer[1] *to Spengler*

N.O., 29.7.31

I have read, naturally at one stretch, your very profound work about the part played by technique in human culture. I hope we shall not have to wait too long for the main work.

Hjalmar Schacht to Spengler

Berlin, 20.8.31

It was a special pleasure to me to see you again in Bayreuth, even if that was not the place for a long philosophical conversation. Until this opportunity arises, the object of these lines is simply to thank you for kindly sending me your last publication, *Man*

[1] Professor of Church History and Archaeology.

and Technique. It is a great pleasure to have before me the thoughts which pervaded the lecture in the Deutsches Museum at Munich, and I hope that I soon shall have an opportunity for a useful conversation.

Spengler to Else Knittel

Munich, 7.9.31

I have not quite got over influenza, and the weather continues to be abominably cold and wet, like Bayreuth. I have therefore again started on a little book which I hope to have ready in three weeks. When at last the weather is fine and you are still there, I will certainly come. At the moment it is impossible. Forgive the horrible handwriting.

Spengler to Else Knittel

Munich, 23.9.31

Today the first snow is lying here, since Bayreuth it has been raining almost without a pause. I imagine that you will give up struggling any longer with the weather and will soon return to Karlsruhe. I hope I can soon send you there a rococo picture to serve as an addition to the furniture. It is possible that I may see something of the sort soon.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 28.9.31

The wine arrived today. I am much obliged to you for sending it and I hope that you will give me an opportunity for discussing some important questions over a bottle of it. I have not been away except for the two days in Bayreuth, partly because of the bad weather, and partly because exchange difficulties have prevented me from travelling to the Harz or to Italy. I am very satisfied with the effect of my book. It has produced the effect which I had foreseen. Unfortunately the inclination for a heroic view of life is not present in part of the young generation. The need for

optimism is basically a sentimental and decadent frame of mind which was not yet current when I was young. At that time we read Nietzsche without feeling that it conflicted with our view of life. Anyone who cannot face up to 'stark pessimism', to use Nietzsche's phrase, does not come into consideration for life's great tasks.

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

Hamburg, 9.10.31

I am grateful to you for sending me your new book about men and technique. I have read your reflections very carefully for the questions of the day are on my mind more than ever.

I entirely agree with you on the point that man is really nothing else but a beast of prey; I am with you further in your views of development. Only in regard to your closing sentence do I not share your opinion. You write: 'only dreamers believe in ways out, optimism is cowardice'. I do not follow you because once when in your company I was quite convinced that 'optimism' is only a relative term.

I have often tried to glean new thoughts from such works as *The Decline of the West*. I tell you quite openly that even *The Decline of the West* did not give me the solutions which I needed. I have repeatedly put down the volumes without having quite understood them. Then I went to see you yourself, and I am glad that we met one another, for again and again after talking to you I have gathered new inspiration for my thoughts. I have always been quite outspoken when I could not say I agreed with you. I frankly admit that much of what you prophesied has taken place. The decline of the West seems to be at hand, and still I do not believe in an end of the world, only in an entire change in our circumstances. Why should not quite new cultures arise in the open spaces in the interior of Brazil, in the interior of Africa, or particularly in the huge unsettled areas of Siberia?

What is happening in Russia is in my opinion a sort of crystallization at those points, which could be in future days the centre of a new great culture. I have always opposed you regarding a

decline of the West. Now I will go so far as to agree with you that we are certainly faced with a tremendous down grading of the West. I recognize clearly that the decaying peoples of Europe are about to collapse. The Viking blood, which was last incorporated in the English, has died out. The tragedy lies in this, that the descendants of those Normans who in 1066 conquered England from Normandy have bled to death on the same spot from which they started, northern France. The 1¾ million men, which England left on the battlefields of Ypres, was such a huge loss of blood for a people already on the downward path, that it will never recover from this loss. I can see before my eyes all too clearly the collapse of the English world empire. With the English dies the Viking race. But must Vikings be of this race? Cannot new races appear of which we know nothing today? Is perhaps not the Slav race appointed to be the people of the new culture? Has not an immense tenacity of life exhibited itself in such peoples as the Serbs, the Bulgarians, even the Greeks, who were so continually destroyed by the Turks, that by the middle of the nineteenth century these peoples had completely disappeared from the world map. My stay in South Russia, in the northern Caucasus, showed me new races, the existence of which I was previously quite ignorant. Wonderful races live down there. Why should these people not be destined to develop a new culture in the wide fields of Russia, and especially of Siberia? I think that you have gone too far in your conclusions when you say we have come to an end. Undoubtedly the number of born leaders in our old Europe is getting smaller. This seems to be particularly the case in the Anglo-Saxon races. I don't think it is mere chance that since Bismarck no leader has showed himself in any of the Germanic peoples, neither in Scandinavia, Germany, England, nor in the United States, whereas the Slavs and Romanic nations have produced unquestionably several leader types; one need only think of Lenin, Mustafa Kemal Pasha, Venizilos, Mussolini, perhaps also Poincaré. . . . I think that in your book you look far too much from the angle of a man of the West. . . . We can see that the other peoples of the world very quickly acquire industrial ideas and the knowledge how to exploit them. Go to South America, Asia, India, China and Japan.

You will find there an industry in course of development which does not lag behind that of the West. Industry is no longer tied to the existence of coal which, as it happens, exists in large quantities in China and South America. Petroleum has altered the requirements for an industrial centre. I do not believe that the mechanization of the world has entered a stage of highly dangerous overstimulation, as you say. . . .

Spengler to Martin Bartels

After 13.10.31

I am most grateful for your letter and the printed material. The latter I knew already, as I have been interested in these matters for years. I have studied science, and for the State examination I prepared an essay on the eyes of the vertebrates. Naturally in my book I have expressed myself very briefly, perhaps too briefly, and not troubled about contemporary terminology. By fixing, I mean, simply the capacity to focus on an object, stereoscopically, whether the movements of the eye muscles are necessary or not. The eye of the owl is so constructed that the position of the head alone suffices. I have repeatedly read in modern literature that the horse cannot see stereoscopically. That is also the conviction of all true horse experts, and incidentally the reason why nervous animals can hardly do without blinkers, because although as a result of the 'double sight', which we human beings with our quite different visional advantages cannot of course explain to ourselves, the outside world does not give them a real orientation. Here one is approaching, to be exact, a metaphysical line of thought, which I wished to avoid at this point. I should very much like to discuss these matters with you, and would request you to pay me a visit if you ever come on a summer trip to Munich.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 19.10.31

I am sending you extracts from the MNN for the last six successive days, in order to show you that its political attitude has not

altered in the least. Brüning is acclaimed throughout. The Socialists stand above any criticism, the word trade union is not mentioned, instead the national parties are made objects of contempt in every possible way. Notice moreover the undertone in the emphasis placed on the special Bavarian point of view. . . .

Edwin Payr to Spengler

Leipzig, 21.10.31

I have taken the liberty of sending you my speech made at the front on the occasion of the one-hundredth anniversary of Bismarck's birth. I beg you to give it a kind reception. Do not judge me too severely. I have most pleasant memories of my visit. It was a great pleasure to me, to be able to speak to you about things and questions which one can discuss only with very few people who have an unprejudiced attitude. Your prophecies in *The Decline of the West* are being fulfilled uncannily soon, sooner perhaps than you yourself had imagined.

. . . H. G. Wells foresees a new war. The prerequisites are present in the form of an anxiously cultivated obliviousness to colossal dangers.

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

Hamburg, 27.10.31

. . . Things seem to develop much more quickly than they did in former times. The political and with it the economic development of the near future is in my opinion hatching out in a very clear form. Wherever one looks, one sees that in the case of the great powers, Liberalism, which was at the helm till now, is doomed to die out. I am convinced that the next English elections will express this very clearly. The English Liberal Party, which under the leadership of Lloyd George represented the strength of the English Government, will probably be as good as swept away in the forthcoming election. The Labour Party in England is also condemned to go down, because it has worked together with Liberalism. It will be dragged into this whirlpool. We see

the same thing in Germany. After the war it was the Democratic Party which together with the Social Democrats got a great majority of the votes. Today the Democratic Party is about to die out. It has not been able to find, or to bring on, a single leader in its ranks since 1918. . . . I do not regard myself as a prophet to be able to foretell now what will come out of the nationalism which is certainly going to increase on all sides in the near future. It will depend on how the leaders in the various nations influence their destinies. In my opinion it appears to stand out clearly today that the present still existing French supremacy will not last long. The weak points in their professed strength are already making themselves all too noticeable. The Frenchman also feels this, therefore he will always rely on what gives him a feeling of safety, namely his own armaments.

Oskar v. Miller to Philip Kremer

Munich, 2.11.31

I received your valued letter of the 26/10. I entirely agree with you that Oswald Spengler is one of the most important men in our literature, and that any lecture he gives deserves general respect. I also, however, share your view that the arrangement of such a lecture is not particularly desirable in the case of the Association of German Engineers, which must in these difficult times above all instil hope and courage in its members.

1932

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

Hamburg, 7.1.32

At the beginning of this week I had a very long discussion and argument with the local National Socialist leaders. Unquestionably in Thüringen, and also especially in north Germany, the Nazis could have found far better people as leaders, as has been the case in Munich. This is quite explicable. The National Socialistic movement started in Munich. Hitler had to fall back on the people who offered themselves at the beginning of his movement, and put themselves at his disposal. These were certainly people with confused minds, who in part joined him for the love of adventure, or from an anti-the-government feeling. Hitler's movement had there made a successful beginning, when he left Bavaria and transferred his movement to central Germany. I consider the movement to be so strong here in central Germany that, in my opinion, it will win the next elections at least in east and central Prussia. I am unable to judge today how far this is the case in the Rhineland, where the Centrum is still strongly rooted and possesses influence. Perhaps I shall go to the Rhineland in March, to get information on the spot. I have a feeling that here in Hamburg the National Socialist movement is growing from day to day, always gaining in strength, because good people have put themselves at the top. . . . Here in the north the nation has no more reliance in Brüning. It is tired of a diet of hopes and promises. It wants an active policy, so the masses here are veering towards one side or the other, either to the Communists or to the National Socialists. This shows very clearly the direction in which we must steer, either to Bolshevism or to National Socialism. I think that we Germans must prefer the latter. If you

come to Hamburg, I will gladly bring you together with the National Socialist leaders. One of them is Dr Nieland, a member of the Reichstag. He was recently what might be called foreign policy representative of the Nazis in England and Italy. Although he only went there for confidential conferences, and to obtain information for himself, the English as well as the Italian newspapers have made a great fuss about his presence. One can see that the English newspapers did this on a hint from above. In England they have a much clearer idea how things are in Germany. Therefore they will show their sympathy towards National Socialism. Naturally the same is the case in Italy.

Tonight I am dining in a small circle with the well-known English Professor of National Economy, Maynard Keynes. He was the first to declare, already in 1919, when he was brought in as financial adviser to the English Government in the negotiations in Paris, that he would not give his support to the proposals and plans put forward at that time. When he saw that he was not successful, even with the English, he at once resigned his office. Ever since he has continually alluded in speech and writing to the madness of the Dictates. He is one of the few sincere men on the other side. I had a long discussion with him in 1923. Certainly this will be a very interesting evening for me.

When I came back from my journey round the world, my first question to you was, how the collapse of the Spanish American Empire began. You answered me that the war of the Spanish Austrian Succession was the beginning of the end of the Spanish Empire, because Spain by taking part in European affairs thereby became untrue to her task of opening up the world. I am convinced that England committed the same fatal error when she decided on August 3, 1914, to take part in a European continental war (not in a world war, as it is often wrongly called). England was therefore untrue to her world task, she must now make atonement for this mistake more quickly than was the case with Spain.

I have often reflected about the observation you made in Munich that, owing to the collapse of European culture, the culture of the whole of south and central America must also collapse. I cannot quite accept what you say. Certainly the Ibero-American

countries, also the Nordic countries like the United States and Canada, will suffer severely under the impending collapse of European culture, but I am still of opinion that new cultures will develop out of the new peoples which are coming into existence there. Cultures have always appeared simultaneously in different parts of the world. Why should that not be possible in the future? 'America for the Americans': this idea today is anchored so fast that no European nation dares to raise the slightest claim to the smallest corner of American land, whether it is on the mainland, or an island. The European countries still possessing property there can be pleased if they are not turned out today or tomorrow. That will certainly ensue if Europe goes further along the path in which it finds itself at present. The complete exclusion of European influence on American soil will also develop in regard to culture. . . . We are seeing now the beginning of the second development 'Asia for the Asians'. Into Manchuria, which up to 1912–14 had only 3–4 million inhabitants, at least 14–15 million Chinese have emigrated since 1914. . . . In this connection I am interested in the thought, what will be the probable developments in Africa. Here, unquestionably, the collapse of European culture will have a devastating effect, putting back the development of this continent perhaps for centuries. For me, in fact, the day is not far off when the Vierkloeur of the one-time free Republic will wave again over a free South Africa, but I do not believe the human stock existing there at the moment will be strong enough to develop its own culture. So we Germans should be more than ever interested in planning as large an emigration to South Africa as possible.

The Duke of Coburg to Spengler

Potsdam, 30.1.32

On January 6th 'A Society for the Study of Fascism' is to be founded with me as President. The task of this society is to examine the theory and the practice of Fascism, and to place the results at the disposal of the leaders of the forthcoming Germany.

The attached regulations, which are based on Fascist ideas, give

further information. The Society is not concerned with current politics. Important personalities from all spheres of the national movement and from learned circles have already promised co-operation. Work will start at once in the arranged committees, which will be formed at once. I beg to inquire whether you are prepared to offer your services and to become a regular member . . . of the society.

I should be grateful also, if you would propose suitable persons from your acquaintance as study members. A prerequisite is readiness to take part in serious work. In accordance with the purpose of the Society we lay no stress on membership simply for the name's sake.

With a German greeting,[1]
Charles Edward,
Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gothe.

Robert Metz to Spengler

Frankfurt/M., 19.3.32

We shall travel on March 31st by the *New York*. . . . The elections went off quietly here, we heard Hitler and Goering in the Festival Hall; the last named is an excellent 'popular speaker'. Hindenburg certainly cannot control affairs, which have gone completely astray. It seems to me that here is another General who loses everything at the end of his life. Very sad, and to a great extent we can thank the German woman, who is politically very inferior to the man, for this riot of nonsense. It is all a national misfortune and is leading straight to civil war. The tricky war demagogue Lloyd George has come back with a vengeance. It will be a nice dance with Tardieu. We delight in our country house, the dogs, the flowers, the wood. That is poetry and life. Come and see us soon, preferably this summer or autumn, before the West has gone under.

In the USA we shall not perish, but we shall be severely humiliated after all our vainglory. The gigantic companies are collapsing

[1] The first appearance in these letters of this particular symptom.—Tr.

in the course of nature; poor Ivar Kreuger,[1] who learnt it all in New York and Chicago, has had to pay with his unfortunate life. This will release other avalanches, especially in the USA. We thank you again for the interesting hours in your *beautiful* home. With best wishes to your sister and greetings from us to you both.

From Adolf Abel[2] *to Spengler*

Munich, 16.4.32

I am reading at the present moment the second volume of your great work, and am always more grateful for the perceptions which I derive from it. I suspect many people of reading this work somewhat superficially, otherwise I cannot imagine how they can consider you a pessimist. Your thoughts, as expressed in this book, have a comforting effect in this chaotic time, and I must again declare that I obtain from them an inward peace, which seems to me most valuable at the moment.

Spengler to Paul Reusch

Munich, 9.5.32

I regret . . . not to have seen you. I hope you will come to Munich in the course of the next few weeks. I enclose an extract from the *Berlin Börsenzeitung*, from which you will see to what manoeuvres the MNN has lent itself. Since the elections not a day passes without some adverse comments on the National Socialists, while Social Democracy is never mentioned in such a connection.

Winand Engel to Spengler

Koln-Dellbruck, 2.7.32

The firm known as 'German Republic', formed by those who instigated and profited by the collapse of 1918, in the course of the last fourteen years has waged the worst sort of democratic

[1] The Swedish 'match king' who disappeared from an aeroplane.
[2] A professor of architecture.

warfare with such persistency that the extremely weighty questions of foreign policy have hardly come within the range of vision of the nation. . . . Now we are standing again at a turning point in our destiny. Will it really be a turning? Or will it remain only an episode? I cannot free myself of the impression that those who are preparing to take over power do not see the full difficulty of the tasks which have to be mastered, if Germany is ever again to achieve political importance. How can Germany ever have a foreign policy if the most effective means for a successful foreign policy, an army worthy of respect, does not exist? I have, it is true, learnt in Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian officer circles, that among the European armies, so far as organization, discipline and fighting capacity, in terms of the armament available, are concerned, the Reichswehr and the Russian army are at the top. The chief value of the Reichswehr is as an excellent framework for an army; but what is the use of a framework if it cannot be properly filled? I am quite convinced that the will to arms of the nation is at the present time most alive as incorporated in the SA and the Stahlhelm. Whether General Schleicher has already considered the idea of falling back on these military minded associations to fill the ranks of the Reichswehr I do not know. In any case the nation is at this time infected to such an extent by internationalism and pacifism, that a national army of the old style is out of the question for a long time. Then to the weakness of the army add the completely impossible strategic position of Germany. I wonder nobody arrives at the opinion that there must be war again in Europe, for the simple reason that many more people are running round with a gun in their hand than before the outbreak of the world war.

Forgive this outburst of a troubled heart, which knows only too well the sleepless nights of which you speak in the *Reconstruction of Germany*. And my confratres have only one ambition, to make sure that the Centrum comes off as well as possible in the next election. One does not know whether to laugh or to cry. With German greetings.

Spengler to Ernst Jünger

After 5.9.32

Many thanks for sending me your new book[1] which up to now I have only glanced at hastily. I would not like however to withhold my main ideas. Like many others you have not been able to free the idea of the worker from Marxist phraseology. The official, the peasant, the contractor, the officer, is a worker as much as the artisan. The only one today who works to the limit of his powers is the peasant, and it is he who is defrauded by the division into bourgeoisie and proletariat. But the peasantry are still a force in Germany. If one confronts the worker as a new type to the allegedly dying body of peasantry, one is getting away from reality, and therefore from any influence on the future, which will follow quite different paths. I should like to discuss these questions with you, and should be delighted if you would call upon me if you happen to be in Munich.

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

11.10.32

The chief purpose of my invitation to you to visit me here was to have the opportunity to ask you to come into the open with another pamphlet. Your allusions are always a basis for discussions, not only in Germany, but in the whole world. I am still of opinion that the National Socialist movement, as such, has not reached its climax. At any rate I do not see Hitler as the great leader. He will certainly not live on in history as a great personality, like Mussolini for example. I well know how mighty figures like Napoleon and Mussolini have wavered at the decisive moment. This was the case with Napoleon when he was first consul, and with Mussolini during the march on Rome, in which he did not take part. So far as I can see Hitler has passed the moment for a march on Berlin, so he is out.

You know that I do not agree with the 'End', to which you allude in your pamphlet *Man and Technique.* I believe that for us the creative impulse has not yet come to an end. Naturally there is

[1] *The Worker.*

a difference of opinion regarding this question. It is clear to me that we are at an important turn of events which will bring with it many new figures and ideas. . . .

Hans Erich Stier to Spengler

Berlin, Tempelhof, 9.11.32

I am sending you today a little book[1] of mine which has just appeared and which I hope you will welcome. You will detect very clearly in it the influence of your thought. I think particularly of the parallelism between classical and European history, which you have worked out more effectively than anyone else, so that it is kept forcibly in front of the eyes of the reader. . . . It seems to me to be established that we can make historical judgments only from the consideration of *our own* past. Thus, in my opinion, we are quite clear about classical history up to the end of the second Punic war. Events of our own time have always helped to illuminate the past. A former philologist, Lehr, exclaimed: 'Woe to the age which quite understands Tacitus!' If I see aright, we are not clear as to the meaning and the direction of development of the later classical period—because we have not reached the same stage in our own history, in order to be able to see clearly how the corresponding stresses are to be distributed.

Albert Schweitzer to Spengler

28.11.32

Many thanks for sending me all your political writings. It is very valuable to be able now to get a complete view of your position. I have been so engrossed in your expositions that it has made me neglect my work. . . .

Arnold Oscar Meyer to Spengler

Munich, 29.11.32

Please accept my best thanks for your kindly sending me your political writings, by which you have given me much pleasure.

[1] *The World of the Pergamon Altar.*

I read the introduction at once: it roars over the reader like a storm. In spite of my time being very much occupied, I certainly hope to be able to read the book very soon, at any rate the new portions of the older which I know. *Prussianism and Socialism* in its time made the strongest, most unforgettable effect upon me. It will interest you that recently, in conversation with Reichskanzler von Papen, I happened to talk about you and found in him an unconditional supporter of your belief in an impending period of Caesarism. I would like very much, as soon as I have read your book, to be able to discuss it with you.

Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria to Spengler

29.11.32

It was a capital idea to have your excellent little essays bound together. Please accept my best thanks with the assurance that I should be delighted to see you again as my guest in the near future....

Henry Koehn to Spengler

Hamburg, 18.12.32

It was a great pleasure to me to receive your recent book. I have read the lectures which I did not know. They are masterpieces. I know nothing equal to them. Perhaps one could venture to say, unfortunately, in fact, one must say, that they are too good for the level of the spheres to whom they are directed. I say this in consideration of the echo that comes back from the revelations and ideas you have given them. Today one hardly notices a trace of the delicate perception and regard for hard facts of the period of Frederick the Great. It is owing to this lack of training and culture that the organic connections with history and with nature have been lost. But I think that actual reason for this lies deeper. The catastrophic state in which we Germans find ourselves as a people, apart from complete political failure, can fundamentally only have its origins in political outlook. In my travels, especially this year in central and northern Germany, I have paid special

attention to this. The result is always the same, that there is no such thing as an individual political outlook. . . . Everywhere perplexity, helplessness and defencelessness, that is to say no decisive activity. I leave on one side the blind and fanatical following behind Hitler, whose supporters themselves in fact do not know what is the mentality of their 'Führer'. The performances of this 'party' are so characterized by semi-education and adolescence that they are in no way equal to the tasks before them. On the contrary I see in them a factor of great danger, as there can be no better means of encouraging Communism than precisely these half-grown charlatans, and these half-growns will not be mature tomorrow, unless a suitable world outlook grows up among them. The present leaders, from their mental origin, are not in a position to offer them one.

The real loss of the world war for Germany lies in the 2 million dead, who today would be forty years old. The layer of healthy men of this age is lacking. The historical tradition is thereby broken, the backward connection sapped. The bridge is not there. An important body of historical inheritance has irreplaceably disappeared. Such losses of a people's substance finally decide history, and often, as in this case, are more decisive than any achievement. Personally I am a member of no party or other association of interested parties. After much observation and thought I have come to the same opinion as Ludendorff. I have the same view that the cause of all our troubles is Christianity. The home in which I grew up was outspokenly Christian. It is not easy to discard a mental possession in which one has been educated. As a view of life Protestantism in comparison with Judaism, Catholicism, and Bolshevism, is a nullity. Nevertheless, it carries with it the immense danger that it has a passive effect upon people. From this comes the lack of self interest, of independence, of capacity for self defence, of instinct for danger. It has had the same effect upon us northern races as in the case of the coloured peoples. The result is a bastard character, which makes our fall a victim to other purer thinking peoples. So long as the narcosis of Christianity is not completely got rid of, any attempt at reconstruction, in home or foreign politics, is pre-conditioned to failure. . . .

An important result of the last war is the unmasking of all nations. The masquerade of European colonial rule is at an end. What could be done to destroy cultures has been done with a vengeance. The expansionary power of the western peoples is sinking in a very steep curve. And a legacy from this force is shown in the fact that people are beginning to change their minds. I believe we are standing at a turning point in history, resembling the period of the Reformation. What was half stripped by Luther must now fall altogether. A similar process, though the circumstances are quite different, must follow in Russia. For the history of the future, nothing perhaps is so important as the question whether Russia will develop a popular religion of its own. For us, and there also, two important disturbing factors are simultaneously playing their part: civilization and the coming war.

NOTE: Spengler himself does not put the 'blame' on Christianity, but on what he calls 'Micheltum'—the amiability of the pre-imperial Biedermeier period. 'A piece of torpid inward Gothic . . . the German romanticism and its dream politics of 1848 have reappeared, that trite cosmopolitanism and enthusiasm for friendship between the peoples and the aims of humanity . . . the eternal provincials, the Biedermänner of clubs, beer tables, and parliaments . . . a sleepy tendency towards English liberalism with its enmity against the State . . . but disregarding the rigid initiative of the individual Englishman, also in politics.' He quotes Mandeville's *Fable of the bees*—the egoism of the individual is the driving impulse of the State—*Preussentum und Socialismus*.

Hjalmar Schacht to Spengler

Lindow, Mark, 19.12.32

With the new appearance of your *Political Writings* you have been good enough to think of me and to send me a copy. I am grateful to possess this collection as well as the single copies, and it will give me the opportunity to read much of it again. If you allow me, I will announce myself to you on my next visit to Munich, which at the moment, however, is very uncertain, and hope for the pleasure of a conversation with you.

1933

Spengler to Albert Knittel

Munich, 9.1.33

On your last card you write me about this year's Bayreuth Festival. So far as I know, *The Ring* and *Die Meistersinger*, as well as *Parsival*, will this time be presented. I should be glad to see the *Ring* cycle and also a *Meistersinger* Evening, and at a time when you yourself also are in Bayreuth. At the moment I am still at work on the second book, which takes longer than I thought originally.[1]

Spengler to Abbot Alban Schachleiter

Dortmund, 24.1.33

I heard with indignation of the treatment to which you were subjected because of your nationalist attitude. It is all the more disgraceful as clearly no one of the Munich circle who knew you well has the courage to face you, and to say openly what is the point at issue. I myself stand quite alone, and must therefore content myself with shaking your hand in the spirit and assuring you that my personal esteem is only enhanced by these events.

As a small sign of my feelings, I ask you to accept a copy of my *Political Writings*, the perusal of which will bring you perhaps a few hours of distraction. It would give me particular pleasure, if your repeated promise to visit me were soon to eventuate.

Spengler to Albert Knittel

Munich, 14.2.33

Best thanks for your news. . . . I should have liked to have seen you here to discuss political matters. The present Carnival

[1] *The Hour of Decision.*

Ministry[1] must have finally given you, like a thousand others, the correct opinion regarding Hi[tler] and Hu[genberg]. I could tell you a number of entertaining details, which naturally are not suitable to put in a letter. Kladderadatsch will presumably appear shortly after the elections, and it is the duty of all nationally minded people to consider how the national movement, as such, can be preserved, when the parties burst asunder owing to the grotesque incapacity of their leading clique.

Abbot Alban Schachleiter to Spengler

Feilnbach, Bad Aibling, 15.2.33

How delighted I was by your letter! How grateful I must be to you! I knew well what I was undertaking, when I took the side of Hitler and his Freedom Movement. It has cost me the Holy Mass for several months.

This is one line of argument: you Catholics must not go with Hitler, he is an enemy of the Church! Because Rosenberg says.... The book called *A Twentieth-Century Myth* has become a great misfortune for the National Socialists. Rosenberg also is the chief writer in the *Völkische Beobachter* and leader of the Kampfbund!

I think I can, indeed must, say a comforting word at least for the Catholics. I am convinced that among the Catholics in Germany there are many hundred thousands, perhaps millions, who would follow the standard of Hitler, were they not held back by the well-known episcopal ordinances. My explanations must have been a deliverance from conscientious scruples to thousands—only for that reason did I write. I have to thank you for your books and the dedication which I value very much. I have only been able to glance at the essays: I will soon read them and enjoy them. I very seldom come to Munich. Since, as allowed by the Church but which exasperated the Cardinal, I prayed a quite *private* Our Father at the grave of Reger, I have been forbidden to stay any length of time at Munich....

[1] The Hitler Cabinet was formed at the time of the Munich Carnival.

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

Hamburg, 4.4.33

. . . I am well aware that you are still busy with part 3 of your new book *Germany in Danger*. Still I should be extremely pleased if you could take a little time off. . . .

We must remember in connection with our internal policy that the question of foreign policy must be tackled. If we wish to recover our freedom of political and economic action, we must take regard not only to internal events in Germany, but watch with much greater attention developments throughout the world. That is a side which interests me, because I think I have the ability to judge, as I have been around in the world with my eyes open for over fifteen years. In Asia, in America, in Africa changes are taking place to which, in Germany, we do not pay sufficient attention; this can be attributed very largely to the fact that we do not understand the inward reasons for developments taking place before our eyes. I hope very much that the new government will not be greatly influenced by the idea of offering the German people only *panem et circenses*, but that it will make an effort to educate the people in political thinking. Here now in Hamburg I can see how the worthy overseas merchant is showing himself to be unteachable. He cannot understand that we must throw the old forms overboard in order to fall in with new forms. The liberal thinking of the English kind, which you describe so excellently in your writings,[1] is still anchored much too deeply in the ideas of the Hanseatic circles. They do not yet see that we must use foreign politics to bring about reconstruction and economic possibilities for ourselves. I must discuss these questions with you. In very numerous conversations and negotiations with National Socialist leaders, I believe that I have understood them in this, that their intentions on certain points are not destructive, as many people in Germany still believe.

It will soon be your task, dear Dr Spengler, as the great adviser of the German people, which you have already been through *The Decline of the West* and through your political writings, to continue your work in a constructive sense.

[1] Especially in *Preussentum und Socialismus*.

[1933]

Spengler to Roderich Schlubach

18.4.33

. . . I have an urgent desire to discuss the new situation with you fully and without constraint. Great possibilities present themselves, but I do not see the men to grasp them and deal with them. Just as very much more can be achieved than was the case a year ago,[1] so can more be destroyed. It is naturally not possible to discuss this in a letter. . . .

Karl Wolfskehl[2] *to August Albers*

Orselina, 9.6.33

. . . My great pleasure in Spengler's wonderful writing has done me good. It has given me courage and confidence. He who gives the warning in danger is no weakling. The immediate state of the world, its deep sources, its aims and possibilities, all this could not be set forth better, more clearly, more objectively, in a more German manner. Spengler's sublime, manly, truly stoic ethos consecrates and dignifies all he writes. In this fateful hour to hear the voice of one who knows, who does not err, of the great herald, to feel it fruitful in oneself, that is a great blessing and full of promise. Each of us lives today in consciousness of a supreme duty. Spengler gives meaning to this feeling. I am not surprised that his words excite the interest of which you write to me, and I think that their effect will be inestimable.

[1] Before Hitler came to power.

[2] A poet belonging to the circle of Stefan Georg.

It will be noticed that poets as well as preachers usually take kindly to Spengler. He never alludes to Carlyle and Ruskin, but is reminiscent of them both. In his so to speak 'mid-season form' in *The Decline* his dithyrambic Isaiah-like utterances rival Carlyle, and the latter's views are expressed by Spengler in the words: 'Materialism, Socialism, and Darwinism are only separable artificially and on the surface.'

Ruskin and Spengler both loved Gothic; Ruskin thought the Renaissance pagan and wicked, Spengler thought that its attempt to recapture the classical was based on delusion. 'They are on their way not to Pheidias but to Palestrina, and their journey began not among Roman ruins, but in the still music of the cathedral.'—Tr.

Hans Freyer to Spengler

Leipzig, 15.6.33

You will shortly receive from the Saxon Ministry for Public Education a call to the Leipzig chair of Culture and Universal History. Allow me to request—I am speaking also in the names of my numerous colleagues—that you will not refuse this call before you have given us an opportunity for a verbal discussion.

We are conscious of presumption in tearing you away from a deliberately chosen way of life. Whether the prospect of direct influence on student youth, and specially of a post enabling you to give practical application to your ideas of political education, could make you decide to give up your freedom and enrol yourself in a university, we cannot decide; on the strength of your speech in 1924,[1] we almost dare to hope.

Spengler to Wilhelm Hartnacke

24.6.33

I am asking to be forgiven because on account of a journey I am only answering your letter of June 14th today. The offer of the professorship in Leipzig is a great honour to me, but I am asking to be allowed to refrain from following up this opportunity for the following reasons.

I withdrew to Munich in the year 1911 in order to be able to carry out my plans. I live so much alone, that as a rule I speak to no one all day long, and that is a necessity for me if I am to work in my own way. If I am compelled to converse with others for some hours, or to argue something out, I pay for it with headaches. A calling in which I should feel obliged every day to hold forth and to answer questions, would deprive me of the possibility of working for myself. Also this professorship—I have some knowledge of the Lamprecht Institute—is burdened with a great number of administrative and various other duties, which with the best of wills I should perform very badly. Finally, I left Hamburg twenty-three years ago, and chose Munich as a residence because the high altitude here suits me, whereas in

[1] 'The Political Duties of German Youth.'

the plain I had to struggle with headaches almost every other day. I am therefore sure that I should after a short time have to resign this professorship, even if I accepted it. I believe that these reasons are sufficiently serious to justify my refusal. However, I thank you very much for the offer.

Wilhelm Hartnacke to Spengler

Dresden, 1.7.33

I have read your letter of June 24th, which was sent on to me here, with regret. I can't argue myself away from the soundness of your reasons. Perhaps sooner or later your health will get better. I have known cases when similar conditions came to an end on reaching a certain age.

As to your proposal for a conference on school and education questions, I welcome it most heartily. It is in my opinion *absolutely* necessary to regard these questions not only from the standpoint of the 'German teaching body'. Just as little as railway questions are an affair of the guards and engine drivers, are school affairs only the business of the official educators!

Spengler to Carl Schuchardt

I am obliged to you for your kind information, and am extremely interested in the developments in your paper. In recent years I have been much interested in these matters from a purely historical standpoint, and have found that at the very point when the problems are most accessible, namely the question of Mycenae, false conclusions are drawn, because the Mycenaean culture is regarded as a unit and as 'Greek'. On this point Wilamowitz and Nilsson unfortunately agree entirely with archaeologists and historians. But it is quite clear that the pit grave people were a Nordic stem, who forced their way here with war-chariots. The burial form is absolutely Nordic. The dead has done with the world and receives his private property in movable possessions as an inheritance in his grave, in so far as he has not disposed of it in his life time. There is no worship of the dead. The dead lives on

with his name and his deeds in the memory. The stele are memorial stones and not menhirs. Further there is a great resemblance which, so far as I know, no one has noticed between these pit graves and those of Novilara: the same grave gifts, the same stele and no cult of the dead. This 'culture' is then overthrown by conquerors from east Spain, Sardinia, or Libya. They have brought with them the domed graves with a definite cult of the dead and representation of a kingdom of the dead; they are dwellings of the dead, if you like, temples of the dead. They have had an 'infernal' respect for the dead in the pit graves, and have therefore dedicated a cult to them. From these people come the forts. Here evidently we are dealing with seafarers and pirates. This invasion came to an end through a new immigration of northern tribes, who with little culture of their own, flattened everything to ground level. How the Greek dialects split into two or three languages, we shall probably never discover. The philologists simplify the problem to an impossible extent. What do we know of Indo-Germanic languages and speech families which have perished without leaving a trace behind? The pre-Grecian speech is a spectre which only does harm. We have learnt from Asia Minor that it is not a question of one language, but of a number of languages belonging to different speech families. The name Achaean obviously is linked with the building of the dome graves, and is therefore Libyan, also the word basileus. But how many Greek words have this origin? I am sure that representation of the Underworld, judges of the dead, etc., come from Africa, and not from Egypt. Nordic people knew nothing of the sort at home.

August Albers to Spengler

21.7.33

I have read your introduction[1] in the worthiest spot in the whole of Munich, the Monopteros.[2] These are the words of a man who knows what he wants and keeps historical reality in view. . . .

[1] *The Hour of Decision.* The publisher was nervous about the effect on Hitler.
[2] The Monopteros—A temple on a height in the 'English Garden'.

I have got a request. I am to submit to you sheets four and five at the request of Herr Dr Sund. He is afraid that you have not corrected them. The sheets have been once before submitted to you. Please be good enough to look once more into the material; read the sheets once more through, and send them back to us. We want to be quite sure that you agree with everything. Imagine, as I came back this morning, I received a letter from Mrs Atkinson. Now I can tell her that you have finished your book. This brave and clever lady, who has done so much for your writings, shall be the first to hear of the completion of your book. . . .

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Bayreuth, 26.7.33

Performances wonderful. Yesterday had long conversation with Gustav.[1] In Munich again on Saturday.

Heinrich Beck to Spengler

Berchtesgaden, 14.8.33

For some days now I have had the proofs of your new book. Being on holiday I could read it straight from beginning to end, and was equally impressed by the importance of the matter and by your language. I find the introduction particularly successful in which with great dignity you show your opponents their place and disarm them. Also I am relieved of the anxiety I felt about you shortly before I left for the country. I heard that you met Hitler in the meantime in Bayreuth and were able to have a longish conversation. I am very curious to hear from you about this conversation. I am returning to Munich at the end of this week or the beginning of next. Your book will come out in a few days' time.

Spengler to Adolf Hitler (from the stenogram)

18.8.33

I am sending you a copy of my new book. I should be glad to have the opportunity of hearing your opinion on these questions by word of mouth.

[1] Hitler (Gustav Adolf). The meeting was arranged by Else Knittel.

Edgar Salin[1] *to Spengler*

Basle, 28.8.33

Karl Wolfskehl, who was here on a visit, thought that it would please you to receive a word of approval of your latest book. I would not have written without this encouragement, because writing which fulminates with such striking conviction stands and holds good in the eyes of the author, however much agreement and enmity he encounters. . . . But I must tell you that for a long time I have not read a political writing with such close attention, in fact pleasure. The entire fate of Germany receives a different aspect, when someone appears who sees things so rightly, and has the courage to say them. You will understand that as a German abroad one follows the constellations of foreign policy which you describe with gripping anxiety, and that often the thought worries one like a nightmare, that we could slide into a Second World War with the same senseless fronts as in the First. I should like to discuss with you various points where I agree and disagree. Graf Finckenstein wrote that you would probably be in Switzerland during the autumn and I should like to meet you.

August Albers to Spengler

Munich, 18.9.33

At Lehmkuhl's there is a huge Spengler show-window. 'Oswald Spengler' is written in large letters at the top of the windowpane. They have extracted striking sentences from your book, and stuck them in large letters on to the window. A little peasant walked into the shop and said he would like to speak to Herr Spengler. When he was told that he was not there, he was surprised because he thought that Oswald Spengler was the owner of the shop. Yesterday I was sitting in the Aumeister[2] part of the English garden and was reading about a new Mani discovery in a lecture by 'Coptic' Schmidt,[3] then I went to C. H. Beck and

[1] Professor of Political Science in Basle.

[2] Aumeister, a forester's house with a restaurant.

[3] Carl Schmidt—Professor of Church History and Coptic literature.

read what Oswald Spengler had written in *The Decline of the West* about Mani and the Manicheans. I should much like to know whether you knew about this pamphlet. For now at one swoop hundreds of papyrus pages have appeared from a ruined house in central Egypt, containing the most important writings of Mani, which throw an incomparable light over all his missionary activities. Above all, the mentality of Arabian culture is recorded from excellent sources. Mani is not affected by western culture; his argumentation is quite interesting. . . . Your niece starts her Rome pilgrimage tomorrow. . . . I am trying to get her for a celebration in the Deutscher Kaiser, but am encountering opposition from your sister. Shall I succeed in overcoming this? . . .

Quotation from Heine's posthumous writings (No. 59 Dusseldorf 1779): 'The times when there was *bellum omnium contra omnes* are according to all historical records always the happiest times for mankind. Danger sharpens the brain and intoxicates the heart. Man is a beast of prey, and the greatest of them.'

Carl Friedrich Goerdeler[1] *to Spengler*

Leipzig, 21.9.33

I have read your new work with great interest. I was particularly interested in what you write about economic forms and possibilities of development. In many things I am in agreement with you, namely, the organic formation of industry. In particular I consider the madness of guaranteeing men a fixed working time and a fixed amount of work the chief cause of the economic disaster. A people can only do that which has saved so much capital that interest represents an elastic cushion between an artificial guaranteed working time with regulation of pay and the actual natural demand. We do not possess this cushion. So the economy has collapsed owing to continued compulsory measures. These economic disturbances, naturally strengthened by the effects of the Treaty of Versailles and by the collapse of Russia, have penetrated also into the countries rich in capital. . . .

[1] Goerdeler, Price Controller under Brüning, and for a time under Hitler, broke with Nazis 1936, and came to England to give warning of Hitler's intentions. Resistance leader, executed 1945.—Tr.

Josef Maria Graf von Soden-Fraunhofen to Spengler

Munich, 22.9.33

Allow me to express my unbounded admiration for the courage with which you have given to the public your latest work: *The Hour of Decision.* The cowardice and weakness at the knees, which has beset all sections of the German people, is one of the most depressing results of this so-called national revolution. I am convinced that your brave example will have a cheering and enlivening effect, and that at the same time the truth masterfully expressed in your work will bring many an intoxicated soul to his sober senses. And thereby you have earned the gratitude of every real German.

Spengler to August Albers

Rome, 7.10.33

Best thanks for your postcard. But send *no* printed matter. Here I am not an author. I live *come un Romano antico.* Via Appia and the Palatine.

Best wishes, you old book and review mole. I hope the rain is beating against the windows.

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

12.10.33

. . . Your new work has already had an unusual circulation. Of this I am very glad. Like many others your writing has had a deep effect on me. For me your productions are guides in my commercial, also in my political, thought. Unquestionably we are living in the decisive years. The political development will not show itself so clearly today or tomorrow as you have concluded in your essay. For such phenomena only ripen quickly when power-natures like Caesar and similar personalities influence the pattern of world history. Still, as a merchant, I cannot help thinking that certain political developments will be strongly influenced in a foreseeable time by the economic collapse. The news which I receive regularly from the United States

indicates how there—exactly as you point out—home politics are becoming influenced by the slide to the left. This completely false and one-sided point of view in favour of the worker, leads to compulsory political measures which never result in favour of the people in question. You have called attention very emphatically to this in your writing. . . . We must all derive much from your wisdom. All your friends are delighted already with the second part of your essay.

Gunther Gründel to Spengler

16.10.33

. . . I beg you not to regard this letter as a new attempt at an advance. I do not intend to visit you again in the event of a favourable reply, for I know that you do not favour visitors. And this manly ruggedness of yours particularly compels a deep respect, even from those of us who almost ought to hate you for the almost nihilistic hopelessness (voluptuous hopelessness) of your thoughts, if we were inferior enough to be able to hate at all. . . .

The reason for my letter is because of the effect of your *Hour of Decision* which I have just read. You point to the completion of the democratic, no: proletarianizing 'White Revolution' and its dangers, without bringing your thoughts in this Part I to a conclusion. For logic demands a continuation, *ergo* only *National Socialism* (as a continual and in the situation today highly organic transition from the era of the masses to aristocratic Caesarism) can save Germany and the West. In all these years, in spite of frequent hearty disagreement, I have never attacked you, out of a stupid reverence or sentimental gratitude, at which you would smile with pity. But now at last I must come forward with some at least of what I have at heart for and against you. But I should like very much to know beforehand whether really you do not intend to continue *The Hour of Decision* in the above-mentioned sense. And I would hardly understand, and like thousands of others would be very sorry if you do *not*, following the logic of your own mighty ideas, become the chief crown witness for National Socialism. I therefore beg you to tell me more on this

point, in order that I do not run up against an open door. For there is nothing personal about this, such as to make myself interesting by a well-directed attack on the greatest political philosopher of the time, but solely for the sake of the cause. Therefore I would gladly avoid an unnecessary attack. . . . Like almost all of us young Germans, I have rejoiced in this year of Hitler's leadership, and have been filled with a quite personal enthusiasm, and it surprises (not to say shocks) us that you do not mention this man at all in your book, and obviously seem to regard him as a *quantité negligeable.*

As it is not out of the question that you will leave this letter unanswered (like my polite congratulations on your fiftieth birthday or the dissertation I once sent you), in that case I can venture to regard myself as having a free hand.

NOTE: Spengler did not answer this letter and Gründel attacked him in *Jahre der Überwindung.*

Goebbels to Spengler

Berlin, 20.10.33

In consideration of the decisive importance of the forthcoming national election for the future of German politics and the German people, I should be grateful if you could provide me with an article, explaining to the German people the significance of the choice put before them, and which is in keeping with the policy of the People's Chancellor. This article might be three to four typewritten pages in length and would then be handed by me to the Press for further circulation.

As regards the theme and the content of the article, I believe that your special interests and the field of your work provide the most natural starting point. I could imagine that the fostering of German culture and talents, as the Government has pointed the way, and the struggle for German honour and position in the world which the Government has entered upon in so determined a manner, could provide the subject of the article. The exact form is of course left to you. An early dispatch of the desired article is highly desirable.

I. A. Haegert.

Spengler to Joseph Goebbels

3.11.33

On my return from Italy I found the letter, copy of which is attached, from your Ministry. I use this opportunity to write to you yourself. I have never yet taken part in election propaganda and neither shall I do so in the future. On the other hand, I should be very glad if, on important occasions of foreign policy, such as the withdrawal from the League of Nations, which I consider to be diplomatically thoroughly correct, I could write an article as coming from me for the German Press. Up to now I have not been able to do this, because there was no department to undertake distribution to the Press.

Certainly this is conditional on the cessation of the unmeasured attacks to which I have been subjected recently in certain organs of the national Press. For instance, during the accidental absence of the Chief Editor, Dr Kotter, two articles appeared in the *Kreuzzeitung*, in which I was described, among other things, as a traitor to my country. It is impossible, to appear in public on behalf of Germany, when at the same time articles of this kind appear. Personally they are a matter of indifference to me. For the last fifteen years I have endured so much abuse that I am sufficiently brazen faced. But in regard to my efforts to work for Germany, they are a hindrance which must be got rid of. When a few months ago I had a conversation with the Herr Reichs Kanzler in Bayreuth, he told me that he considered it of great importance for people outside the party to be won over for a German policy. That is also my convinced opinion, but it miscarries as I have said, if a certain restraint is not observed in criticism of such persons. I would request you therefore to use your influence so that this does not occur in the future.

I add a request to be able to speak to you personally, an occasion for which is seen to arise in Munich soon. I could communicate with you on various subjects, and perhaps I would have some proposals to make.

Crown Prince Wilhelm to Spengler

Berlin, 12.11.33

I feel obliged to tell you once more what a great pleasure it has been to me to study your work *The Hour of Decision.* Most of what you write speaks to me from the heart, and many things you have written have had for some time a great effect on me. Your views regarding future developments can only be described with the word prophetic. I should be very glad of an opportunity in the near future to speak to you personally.

Heinrich Beck to Spengler

6.11.33

The royalties account, which I am enclosing already, is close to the 100,000. The success of your *Hour of Decision* already passes, at least as far as tempo is concerned, *The Decline of the West.* You will certainly be pleased and I am proud also of publishing such a book. The pleasure is all the greater because of the present desolation in the book market. Thus the daily bread articles in my legal department are failing because the papers are full of legal reforms, and nobody wants to buy a book that will soon be out of date.

Your book is attacked from time to time by the National Socialists, as was only to be expected. Recently, for instance, a bookshop in Göttingen wrote that the leader of the student body demanded that the book should be removed from the show window, shortly the book would be more or less prohibited. So long, however, as the National Socialist heads of the State quote your book so freely, like the Saxon Minister President Killinger, one need have no fears. Furthermore, a National Socialist Ministerial Councillor in the Prussian Ministry of Culture informed me that he will mention your book in a very favourable sense in the *Paedagogisches Zentralblatt*, which is issued by the Ministry of Culture itself.

What did you think of the Fascist street improvements on the Forum Romanum? Did you enjoy your trip?

NOTE: *The Hour of Decision* gives a sketch of modern history leading up to

[1933]

Hitler's coming to power in 1933. 'We are living today between the periods. The State-world of the eighteenth century was a picture of rigorous style like the contemporary creations in music and mathematics. . . . An old and mighty tradition ruled over everything. . . . Everything proceeded with ceremony and politeness as before a duel.' . . . Until Peter the Great founded Petersburg, Europe was only a geographical expression. With the advent of Bolshevism Russia is lost to Europe and has joined Asia. 'The whole area west of Moscow and the Ukraine forms a gigantic glacis against Europe and could be abandoned without the system being destroyed. Any thought of an assault from the West is out of the question.' 'The Left' is the intellectual rationalistic-romantic belief that one can conquer reality by means of abstraction. 'Workers' Socialism' is capitalism from below; a reflection of the Manchester School theory of the supremacy of share capital. Pay takes the place of shares. There are many open as well as slightly veiled attacks on National Socialism. 'It is an error to believe in the possibility of a single party. A party presupposes a party in opposition. It is a childhood malady of all revolutions to believe in a victorious unity. The problems of the time demand a duality. The total State was achieved by the Jacobins in 1793 in two years of terror. Every ideological movement refuses to believe that history goes on after it. When I speak of race it is not in the sense employed by the anti-Semites. You are secretly pleased at the murder of a political opponent. How can you say anything against the Bolshevist slaughters?' The advent of the Nazis to power is compared to the alliance between the equites and Clodius. He ends, as usual, on an alarmist note: 'There is a Nordic world-feeling from England to Japan, full of joy at the hardness of human fate . . . the legions of Caesar are awake again.'

Rudolf Graber[1] *to Spengler*

Wassenzell/Eichstatt, 24.11.33

The unknown person who is writing to you is a Catholic priest. Although I realize that I am fundamentally divided from you, I am very grateful for your works. As a student I read your *Decline of the West* and still today I have no hesitation in saying that it is intellectually perhaps the most important work of the post-war period, not possible because everything in it is true, but because after a long interval of time a creative venture has succeeded which meritoriously stands out from all literature of the compilation type and the worthy mediocre literary disquisition. I have actually just quoted in my sermon a sentence in your last work, in which you write that only one thing more is permitted to us, to stride along the road of our life meanly or nobly. The straightforward way in which, in your last book, you regard the

[1] Professor of Theology, Bishop of Regensburg.

events of the present time is having a very beneficial effect. Here I know myself to be in entire agreement with you. I am somewhat surprised at your attacks upon a degenerate priesthood. Much of what you say here also is justified, although I should have liked you to have kept in this chapter to the courteous way in which you speak about the nobility and the priesthood in the second volume of *The Decline*. Meanwhile there is one mistake which I cannot quite forgive you, particularly as I believe I am entitled to speak on this subject, namely, that footnote concerning Catholic theology, when you quote St Thomas about the joy which the blessed feel in contemplating the damned. . . . The passage you quote is not found in Thomas; it is taken from the index of his Summa. If one reads through the *articulus III utrum beati laetentur de poenis impiorum* of supplement III . . . you will notice the difference at once. Further this part of the Summa is not by Thomas, but is a compilation from his works—I do not know if you have the text in front of your eyes. But I should be very sorry if criticism, as is usually the case, were to concentrate on these points, instead of seeing the whole; I am much interested in the written reply announced by the firm of Stalling. Even if views of life separate us, that will not prevent me admiring your genial vision, your inexorable sense of facts, your logic, and from trying to make my criticism at least consequent.

Alfred Hugenberg to Spengler

Berlin, 9.2.33

I am very anxious to express to you my regrets and my thorough disapproval of the attacks on your last book in the gutter Press. Perhaps there will be an opportunity later for an explanation as to how it was possible that they appeared, although I expressly disapproved the first.

Fedor Stepun to Spengler

Dresden, 16.12.33

A little book by me under the title *The Face of Russia and the Vision of the Revolution*, published by Gotthelf, has just appeared.

It is quite short and is actually only an expanded lecture. The publisher writes to me, it would be of great value to obtain a written opinion from you. (That such an opinion is still more valuable to me—I do not need to say.) First, because in spite of my different standpoint I value you particularly as a thinker and a writer. (In the winter of 1919–20 I gave four lectures on your *Decline* in hungry and freezing Moscow, which were heard by more than 2,000 people. On the strength of this, 10,000 copies of a book about you with contributions by Berdiajew, Frank, and myself were sold in Moscow and Petersburg.) Secondly, because I am of the opinion that my interpretation of events should interest you. I lived very intensively through the revolution in Russia. I was not turned out till 1922.

Henry Koehn to Spengler

Hamburg, 22.12.33

The receipt of your new work has been a great pleasure. World history, so far as it can be surveyed, and insight is permitted, permits no other interpretation, if one faces it in a free and unprejudiced manner, and if one intends to comprehend its inner structure, as it is. . . . Yet one will only arrive at your outlook if one has an inclination towards the spirit of Beethoven. Without arrogance, relentlessness, depth and precision of feeling, without 'Supermanship', and strong individual freedom with a desire for the straightforward and the genuine, one will understand nothing of the organic and strict architecture of history.

Heinrich Schaeder[1] *to August Albers*

Spengler's new book is likely to have a victorious career like his first. Certainly it fascinates, one can read it through in a night—but what sort of extraordinary people are the Germans? They take their refuge in a satanic wicked book in a time like this, when faith, hope and love, these most simple and serious things, are

[1] Professor of Orientalism at Königsberg. Wrote on Goethe and *A way to T. S. Eliot*, 1948.

the only ones which ought earnestly to be studied. And nothing is absolutely so far from them as what Spengler enjoins. Here he is gradually being made into a mythical figure: ill, not leaving his lonely room for weeks on end, more and more incapable of tolerating men and the human. I imagine this has something to do with it. In summer I was sorry that he refused the offered Leipzig professorship—there he would have been as good as anyone—but perhaps I had not really considered the question enough.

1934

August Albers to Spengler

5.2.34

. . . Herr Dr Benz has just written that he cannot write about you 'because the discussion has for the time being been prohibited by higher authorities'.

Spengler to J. David

Munich, 1.3.34

. . . There is an agreement between the firm of Beck and myself that contracts for translation of my works must also be approved by me. In this case the position is that for certain reasons I cannot yet agree to permit a French translation. You are doubtless aware that my book has been misunderstood by a section of the ruling party in Germany, and consequently attacked. As nothing is further from my wishes than a course of action which could be represented as a neglect of patriotic duties, so I must for the present—that is not to say for ever—refuse a translation into French, as this also might be misunderstood. I have of course nothing against the publishing house of 'Mercure de France', on the contrary I value it very highly on account of its literary generosity. . . .

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

5.3.34

On the journey to Brazil I was able to converse with a number of interesting Ibero-American politicians (one can hardly use the word statesmen for these people). In Brazil, the Argentine, Bolivia, Chile, etc., politicians are at the head of affairs, who got

to the top not through their statesmanlike discretion, but only as forceful individualities. These sort of people have a relatively primitive view of politics. But they feel instinctively that their fall is imminent if they do not resort to such methods as the National Socialist Party has applied in Germany, so they were anxious to consult me, in order to obtain information about this movement.

Albert Knittel to Spengler

Karlsruhe, 17.3.34

As I very seldom go to Berlin, I could do very little indeed about your affair. *The* fact remains: 'discussion' (see letter of 5/2) is prohibited for all publishers. A number of friends have told me this. Unfortunately I could not anywhere get hold of the original prohibition, anymore than in our own office. Snowed up with incoming regulations, editors are very glad to get rid of obsolescent 'wishes'. It is peculiarly amazing when on the other side one finds writings announced which deal with your works, but take up a position against you in a most one-sided manner.

Hans Luther to Spengler

German Embassy, Washington, D.C., 27.4.34

Allow me with these lines to introduce to you Mr Guido Renaldo Perera, who will ask you to grant him a short interview. I hardly need to underline the fact that your work is attracting attention in the United States in an ever increasing extent.

Hans Erich Stier to Spengler

Berlin, 30.4.34

. . . A slavish hanging on to the skirts of 'public opinion' is unfortunately still customary, although the *professional* representatives of this from time to time clearly proclaim that they do not desire anything of the sort. The deeply rooted modern enmity towards history in the true sense of the word is still

paramount. History is resented, so it is dissolved into biographies of individual personalities. A history of the sort you sketch in your letter, at this time only you could write. The shifting of the centre of gravity from the south to the north we have also in the classical age: from Hellas to Macedonia. This corresponds to the transference of world leadership from France to England. I should like to call your attention to a book about to appear, *Herodots-Kroisos-Logos* by Dr Fritz Heilmann. It makes what is, in my opinion, a most important attempt to show that Herodotus' view of the world was his own, and not one obtained solely from the categories of the previous century.

The connections with what you wrote in *The Decline of the West*, vol. I, about Greek life feeling and the Greek idea of fate, are in my opinion quite striking. Above all, the book is a confirmation of your statement, that the further classical life is revealed to the student, the more foreign it seems to us to be. . . .

Spengler to Wolf Goetze

Munich, 2.6.34

My best thanks for your good wishes, but you have given me rather a shock by the attached proposal. Please do not take any steps in this matter. I could not bear to be in this way the centre of a society like those formed round dozens of names like Steiner, Hermann Wirth. . . . What I have written must have its effect slowly. Popular it will never be. It is only written for the few, and will only bear fruit among the few. All these half democratic organizations only compromise the names with which they are decorated. I do not wish to write any more about this. I hope we shall meet soon in order that I can explain my reasons thoroughly.

Spengler to Hans Erich Stier

Munich, 6.6.34

That is good news. I hope that the magazine will be started now without further difficulties. . . . As regards my contributions I have divided the whole period—the history of the second

millennium B.C., under a number of special essays, one of which I hope to be able to deliver every month. The titles will be something as follows:

1. Tertessos and Alaschia
   (also trade, sea traffic, writing and speech in western Mediterranean).
2. The Achaeans
   (the contrast between pit and dome graves).
3. Kefti and Kreti
   (the Kreti belong to the layer of the sea-peoples, the Kefti to the Minoan culture).
4. The Ionians
   (the history of western Asia Minor and its connection with Crete).
5. The 'Sons of Anak' = 'ἄναξ).
   (see peoples' problem).
6. The Etruscans
   (early history of Italy in connection with Greece).
7. The War Chariot and its importance in world-history.
8. Origin and formation of the classic 'peoples'.
9. Armenians and Aramaeans.
10. The movements of peoples in inner Asia and inner Africa in the second millennium and their cause (Indo-Germanic problem).

. . . I have been thinking about these questions for ten years, and have gradually arrived at quite divergent results from those of contemporary research. . . . Etruscan is a loose name used by the later Romans for everything north of the Tiber. Historically it is a mixture of races, languages, and cultures, which first must be sorted out.

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

11.2.34

. . . Roosevelt, who at the bottom of his soul perhaps subscribes to Fascist principles, or allows himself to be influenced by this

line of thought, is not strong enough, like Mussolini or Hitler, to free himself from the conceptions of past times, namely from the liberal democratic point of view. Roosevelt has still today selected for his financial advisers, above all, people from these circles. His chief adviser in finance questions, and thus at the same time his Minister of Finance, is a certain Morgenthau. This man is the son of the former American ambassador in Constantinople, who was considered particularly suitable for Constantinople owing to his Galician origin. Further Roosevelt has advisers like Strauss, Warburg, and similar Jewish fellow workers. All these people cannot free themselves from their liberal democratic principles. They cannot understand the developments of the time. They are dragging Roosevelt back again into the old channels. Accordingly the finance policy of the United States is, so to speak, running consistently into the shallows.

Spengler to Eleonora Quesada

12.8.34

Your letter has confirmed all my fears. I thought before that in money and health matters you had fallen on bad times. I am very sorry, but naturally I am not in a position to give you any advice. If I would not intrude, I should like to pay you a visit, to see if I could help you in some way or other.

H. Brunswig to Spengler

16.8.34

I feel obliged to express to you my indignation and my pain at the unfounded, personally malicious, and rancorous way in which your last book *The Hour of Decision* and going further back, your chief work, were attacked recently.

As I have not succeeded in selling a short article in opposition to this, nothing remains for me except to tell you personally how ashamed, as a German, I feel of these attacks. . . . Nationalism, like morality, does not need explaining, but it is distressing and shaming if a great and fascinating movement has not yet so far

advanced as to raise itself and its disciples in spirit from the lowlands of a shallow 'popular' interpretation of events, fashioned to serve mass propaganda, into the pure ethereal heights of primal human thought.

Nothing has happened which does not confirm your political perspective, slowly and painfully the mistakes which you had already foreseen are being retrieved. (Röhm; Hitler now supported by the army as Führer.). . .

The second great disappointment after Röhm, now with Italy, the weakness in Austria, for which in my opinion we cannot blame them, the rejection of Autarchy, the interest slavery, and all the bitter syrup of so many other word-fetishes that we have gone in for and overcome, all this, I hope will knead and shape him to the truly great statesman whom we need. For the time being, no doubt he lets the hounds bay, to keep them busy.

I am anxiously awaiting the second part of your *The Hour of Decision* on which they are pouncing now like vultures on carrion. In fifteen years of loneliness in the Argentine your works were a deep experience and a powerful comfort. Please pardon my unusual and presumptuous action in writing this letter.

NOTE: Dollfuss was murdered by Nazis in July 1934, but further success was countered by the advance of Italian troops to the Brenner.

Spengler to Hilde Kornhardt

Bayreuth, 21.8.34

The *Ring* was splendid. The chevalier (Ritter von Epp) greeted Frau Knittel as my niece! I am coming back on Friday evening via Augsburg. I hope you are enjoying yourselves.

Paul Reusch to Spengler

Oberhausen, 4.10.34

Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria will be at the Katharinenhof on October 10th, about midday. I should be extremely pleased if you would come at the same time. I have asked Dr Escherich also.

1935

Grand Duke Joseph Francis of Austria to Spengler

Budapest, 2.1.35

It will perhaps interest you to know that I have given an interview in the Hungarian Press on the subject of our notable conversation. I am sending you the article; if it is of interest to you, you can get it translated at the Hungarian Consulate. With good wishes for the New Year.

Roderich Schlubach to Spengler

5.1.35

I do not want to enter into a long discussion on the present trend of politics. It distresses me rather to see how you view developments at the present time, with quite different eyes from mine, not only in Germany, but, thereby connected, also throughout the world. Often and willingly I have been impressed and guided by the wonderful expositions in your works, because they explained the course of events so clearly. Today I can follow you no longer. I attribute this to the fact that I look upon the political and consequent economic changes that are taking place in the world from a quite different angle from yours. Since the beginning of 1931 I believe I realized to what a great extent the economy and especially politics throughout the world were affected by technique. Mankind must first of all make quite new foundations before it is possible to build up. Until these new forms have been created, unavoidably we shall have to go through a whole series of fermentation phenomena which onlookers cannot grasp, and therefore do not understand. Still I think such sharp judgments, as I have heard from you, do not sufficiently hit the kernel of

the matter. Perhaps I am wrong. I have always in my life been an assenting individual, so my nature struggles against the kind of interpretations and injunctions which I have heard from you. On the other hand I well understand that you as a student must come to deeper conclusions than me, as I must always work on the surface. I have not the gift of thinking in centuries. As a man who gets a lot round the world, I can only consider and judge immediate developments with a sound human judgment. From this point of view, it seems to me that we, as our leader repeatedly emphasizes, are at the *beginning* of developments in Germany. Therefore I do not pass judgment on one side or the other, but only watch to see how things shape. If I regard the developments of the year 1934 in this light, it seems to me a deviation if one does not recognize the progress in Germany as a step towards attainment of internal unity. As a merchant, it was clear to me on what an abyss we stood at the end of 1930, and the beginning of 1931. Today I am not conscious of this danger. Certainly the collapses in world trade are being felt in Hamburg more severely than ever, but on my journey to America I discovered that the bottom point must have been passed. I have always found that a nation can make more important political decisions if there is economic control in the country. That will also be the case in Germany. Therefore I enter the new year, 1935, with more confidence than I did in 1934.

Spengler to Hans Erich Stier

Munich, 15.9.35

I hope your wishes in regard to Münster will be fulfilled. I can well imagine that you prefer the quiet little place, which I know a little, to Berlin. What I am fond of in Westphalia is the landscape with its castles and its isolated farmhouses. There is much old culture hidden there which is not so easily defeated. I have already sent back the proofs. I enclose Matz' article. I have read it from beginning to end in complete disagreement. It is again the belief in the sole blessedness of ceramics and in the pre-Greek proto-speech, the pot into which one throws all endings and

roots; and then, from the fact that they are there, the existence of a centralized language is regarded as proved. No question of a historical view. If you will send me the *Guide through Tiryns*, I should be very grateful to you. I possess it only in the first edition. When my fifth article appears, I should like the publishers to send the whole to a couple of people whose opinion I trust—in case this has not already been done—I mean in particular Karo, Nilsson, Ranke, Scharff, Wilcken, Bossert and some others. I do not know whether the publishers have also sent copies to English and Italian historians. We can discuss that when you come here. I should also like to call your attention to Professor Wedemeyer in Leipzig, the successor of Conrady, the best of the young sinologues we have. His early Japanese history is a brilliant achievement.

Hugo Obermeier to Spengler

Victoria Palace Hotel, Paris, 19.9.35

. . . May I take the liberty of mentioning a few points in regard to your studies on world history of the second millennium B.C. The bow is not a creation of the third millennium but existed already in the late palaeolithic (wall paintings, eastern Spain), and in the neolithic (pile dwelling discoveries).

The cause of the destruction of Knossos and Phaistos is in all probability attributable to an earthquake catastrophe, which took place about 1600. Regarding the ceramic problem, usable potters' clay is found all over the world. Clay articles, on account of their fragility, are not an article of distant *commerce*, and if for example the remains of Mycenaean pots are found in Sicily, Mycenaean pirate ships must have reached there. The regular *trade in superior pottery* is very late and occurs in the full 'colonial period' of the Mediterranean peoples.

Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche to Spengler

Weimar, 15.10.35

To my great grief I hear that you are parting from the Nietzsche Archive, and do not wish to have any more to do with it. I

regret this extremely and cannot imagine the reason. I have been informed that you are taking an attitude of strong opposition to the Third Reich and its Führer, and that your departure from the Nietzsche Archive, which sincerely reveres the Führer, is connected with this. Now I have myself experienced your speaking with great energy against our highly honoured new ideal. But that is exactly what I do not understand. Does not our sincerely honoured Führer have the same ideals and values for the Third Reich, as you have expressed in *Prussianism and Socialism*? How has your strong opposition arisen? But perhaps I am mistaken and there are other reasons than our connection with the ideals of National Socialism which are separating you from us; do write me a word of explanation and comfort. It was suggested to me as a guess that your renunciation was due to a book. Then I examined my memory and asked myself: it cannot possibly be my last book? It contains only harmless stories, in which you earlier expressed pleasure. So, my honoured friend, tell me what is separating you from us. Your departure from us is such a deep grief, and I cannot find the true reason for it.

Spengler to Gerhard von Janson

Munich, 27.10.35

. . . Naturally I will say nothing about questions connected with the immediate position. It seems to me that Mussolini has lost the calm statesmanlike superiority of his first years, otherwise he would not have embarked on an adventure[1] so evil and, whatever happens, fatal to Italy. England today is quite determined not to tolerate any great power on the route to India, and will therefore after the parliamentary election in some form bring about an end to the Italian aspirations. Will you really not be coming for skiing in the Alps this winter? I should have liked a long talk with you.

[1] The Abyssinian war.

Spengler to Walter Jesinghaus

27.10.35

Dr Beck has already informed me of the contents of your letter. I am of the same opinion as you that it is little use staying on the literary committee controlling Nietzsche expenditure, because neither you nor I are informed as to what is being done or planned in Weimar, but we bear the responsibility for something which we are quite unable to control. I have advised Dr Beck urgently to stop merely writing letters, which only leads to inconsequent replies, and personally to send a request to Weimar in the form of an ultimatum to return to proper procedure or not to delay any longer with the necessary consequences. I resigned from the Board of the Nietzsche Archive some weeks ago, because I did not approve of its procedure, and the tendency, which appears clearly enough in Oehler's book, does not appeal to me. Either one cultivates the philosophy of Nietzsche, or that of the Nietzsche Archive, and if both contradict one another to the extent which is the case at present, it is necessary to make up one's mind.

Spengler to Albert Knittel

Munich, 22.12.35

For such a long time I have heard nothing of you that your welfare, in every sense, is causing me some anxiety. Write me a letter. With the best Christmas wishes to you and yours.

Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria to Spengler

28.12.35

His Royal Highness the Crown Prince would be delighted if you could come to breakfast on January 7th at 12.30 at Leutsletten Castle. Herr Kommerzienrat Reusch is also invited, perhaps you will be able to join him. . . .

[1935]

Spengler to Roderich Schlubach

Munich, 29.12.35

I reciprocate your good wishes in the hope that eventually you will recognize my views of affairs as justified by the facts.

Perhaps we shall have opportunity for discussion, if you can arrange to look in on Munich on your return from America. It is easy to manage by Zeppelin. Anyway I wish you the best of success over there in the New Year, and hearty greetings, also from my sister and my niece to you all.

1936

August Sylvius Graf Pückler to Spengler

Schloss Kleinöls, Ohlau-land, 27.2.36

May I be permitted to inquire most politely, in the hope of not appearing too demanding, what are the reasons which have prevented a continuation of *The Hour of Decision* and its publication. Is it perhaps possible, in case political conditions are to blame, to obtain a privately printed copy? I gather that illness is not the reason from the fact of your collaboration in the magazine *The World as History*. On the other hand I do not wish to accept the fact that the present Government prevents the appearance of the books of its best patriots, because they do not agree with every word of the prevailing ideology.

As a great admirer of your ideas and works, as to which there is now in public an incomprehensible, anxious, silence, but which nevertheless are to be found in every house that I know. It would be a great honour and pleasure to my parents, my brothers and sisters, and myself to be able to welcome you in our country house. The castle and village are called Branitz and is near Cottbus in the Niederlausitz, about two hours car drive from Berlin. The house is surrounded by a beautiful rest-inspiring park, particularly in summer and autumn, which was laid out by Prince Pückler,[1] and which you would perhaps be interested to see, and at the same time Muskau, the Prince's *chef d'oeuvre*, which is near by. Perhaps you would like to repose in the quiet of the countryside if you were for any length of time in Berlin.

[1] Apart from his interest in parks and ladies, Prince Pückler was a student of British politics. He was of opinion that the British parliamentary system was less efficient, and was on the downgrade, since the abolition of 'rotten boroughs'. It seems quite likely that Spengler and others were influenced by this opinion—page 422 and onwards, vol. II of *The Decline of the West*.

Then I could pay off a small part of the gratitude, which I feel I owe you. With an expression of admiration for the depth and clarity of your thoughts, for the boldness and the beauty of your speech, and of thanks for the mental enrichment that I have received from your works.

I remain,
Yours truly,
August Silvius Graf Pückler.

Spengler to Robert von Heine-Geldern

12.3.36

I am obliged to you for writing to Professor Bachhofer, who is now in Chicago and probably is longing to get back to more intellectual surroundings. I would like to ask you about various things, but as under the circumstances a visit on your part to the Asiatic Society in Munich is out of the question, I must do it in writing. I send you some pamphlets, from which you will see that I have been working for years at certain Asiatic historical problems, for which your essays have always been very useful. . . . I should be very grateful if you would send me your latest works. . . . You have probably read the recent essay by Bachhofer, in which he reduces considerably the age of early Chinese ceramics, in which I consider he is perfectly correct. I am convinced that the centre of gravity and of dispersion of this (migratory) movement was not on the lower Danube and in southern Russia, but in central Asia from which conquering tribes emerged in all directions, in the second millennium in war-chariots, in the first millennium on horseback, and reached the western points of Europe and the south-eastern points of Asia. The reason for this pressure of population lies in the increasing formation of deserts in central Asia, just as the spread of sand in Arabia drove waves of people speaking Semitic languages towards the north. . . .

[1936]

Robert von Heine-Geldern to Spengler

Vienna, 27.3.36

. . . I have read your works, which you were kind enough to send me, with the greatest interest. I entirely agree with you as to the outstanding importance of the war-chariot in the history of the second millennium. It seems to me remarkable, and certainly important from the point of view of culture history, that, in contrast to the widespread rejection of the bow in Europe, the eastern Indo-Germanic peoples already regarded the bow as the most aristocratic weapon. This is shown for example in the Vedas, when the sword hardly appears, although, as I have tried to show in my work on archaeological traces of the Vedic Aryans, these already possessed the sword when they migrated to India. The preference for the bow by the Iranians is clearly shown also in the Persian wars. We are clearly dealing here with a very important distinction between the conception of western and eastern Indo-Germans.

I have also read with great interest your article on Tartessos and Alaschia. I agree to a great extent with your remarks about the overestimation of ceramics. I should be most grateful if you would send me your other articles from *The World as History*. . . . I only hope that you do not take me for a 'specialist', for nothing is more obnoxious to me than real 'specialistism', and I regard my asiatic-oceanic special field only as a firm basis from which I can spread out in all directions.

I am most particularly and personally interested in your essay on the age of the American cultures and, as this is a subject on which I have occupied myself intensively for years, I can venture to go into the matter further. You are naturally quite correct in your remarks about the rapidity of culture changes and of the migrations of peoples. But one must not overlook that at the same time there are areas and periods in which culture forms have remained almost unaltered for thousands of years. Thus the art of the Dongson culture still survives in wide areas of Indonesia and Melanesia, that is to say a culture which arrived in the islands from the mainland at latest in the centuries roundabout the birth

of Christ (probably in the course of the second half millennium B.C.). Also the much older Neolithic art style still survives in many areas of upper India and Indonesia, which cannot, it is true, be altogether established archaeologically, but certainly ethnologically (also naturally many other cultural objects originating from the neolithic).

I think that we can only understand rightly the relation between the American high cultures and the Asiatic if we take regard to the possibility of persistence throughout an extremely long period....

From Ludwig Bachhofer to Spengler

Chicago, 1.4.36

... Finally you ought to live for a short time in America. I hope that one day I will be able to tell you a lot about it, which will interest you very much. You cannot imagine how far the political and social situation has gone astray, also one discovers that this country is quite wrongly seen and described. The lack of culture is sometimes grotesque. Anyhow it is my impression that this is not the land of unlimited possibilities, but the land without hope, although the national resources are extremely rich....

Spengler to E. von Eickstedt

Munich, 5.4.36

Many thanks for your parcel. Professor Heine-Geldern has in the meantime ... also sent me the article I asked for. I have a fleeting knowledge of it from a lecture in the Society of Asiatic art in Munich. I am sending you through my publisher a copy of my two volumes, you will easily find from the index the passages in which at that time (1921) I gave my views about race questions and their connection with other problems of the history of cultures. My bookseller, from whom I tried to order your work *The Science of Races and History of the Races of Mankind*, told me that it was not to be obtained at the moment. Could you perhaps get me a copy? I have read the article about the Aryans in India,

and am in hearty agreement with it. My next article in *The World as History* will deal with just these matters. You probably know the first series of five articles.

Spengler to Robert von Heine-Geldern

5.4.36

. . . My conviction that all the movements of peoples of this (second) millennium came from central Asia, that is the area between the Volga and Manchuria, has become stronger than ever. Also the movement, in the eighth century B.C. mentioned by you, came from there, as is shown by migrations of Cimmerians and Scythians, the development of the Hallstatt culture up the Danube, the contemporaneous influx of the Medes and Persians from the Caspian Sea towards the south and the barbarian peoples from the west into China. The 'Tocharians' have become a real muddle thanks to the method employed by the learned of the present day of mixing up the names of people, and languages and actual races. You know the article by Sten Konow on the question of whether Tocharish is the language of the Tochars. Up to now no one seems to have observed that the name itself from its ending belongs together with Tartars, Chezars, Bulgars, Magyars, etc., and is therefore a Mongol word. The language itself may have been introduced there in the post-Christian period, perhaps quite late by a group of warriors and by chance becomes the written language of a sect. The Bulgarians in the eighth century gave up their language, but not their name. From the Galatians in Asia Minor we do not possess a single Celtic term. So long then as we do not separate the name, the language and the race, according to their special fates, we cannot expect to get any results in this question. What you say about the arms of the Vedic Aryans is of course correct. When they broke into India they brought the northern sword with them, but in the south they learnt to use the indigenous weapon, the bow, which had come to eastern Asia sometime before by way of Egypt and Babylon, while in the north it was despised as unchivalrous. The Homeric Greeks also regarded the bow as the coward's weapon, hence the puzzlement

caused by the introduction of the non-Greek Odysseus with his bow into this world.

Spengler to Edouard Spranger

Munich, 5.4.36

You have sent me through Herr Albers your lecture *Problems of Culture Morphology*. I am most grateful and only wished that I was able to discuss these questions with you; I so much dislike writing letters. I have always had an objection to the term Culture Morphology. The idea of a culture sphere in about the year 1900 was only a principle of arrangement for museum specimens, and explains a culture by means of quite coarse externalities such as the shapes of pots and methods of nutrition. I called my book a *Morphology of World History*, because for me it is a question of living life cycles (lebendige Aufläufe), and not of layers of accidentally preserved articles. Culture is for me an inward form of historical 'becoming' and not a sum of similar objects. If this is called biological, that also applies to Goethe's view. It is not however the materialistic biology of the age of Darwin, from which the culture sphere idea originally started, but a metaphysic of life, which confronts with much scepticism the external material side. But I will not say any more about it in a letter.

NOTE: After his death Goethe was recognized as having rendered valuable service to science in the fields of morphology and evolution, particularly by his *Versuch die Metamorphosen der Pflanzen zu erklären*, 1791, and by some of his discoveries which he called aperçus. Whereas the Darwinian school regarded evolution as a mechanical process in which causality and chance were predominant, Goethe thought of it as an attempt to reach a predetermined type. 'The type is the secret and invisible model to which every living thing must move, striving to break through its appointed limits (its destiny).' Goethe says the song of the nightingale might perhaps be described as such an attempt to break through. Sometimes this could be said of a human being. 'Nature is a mysterious creative power, immanent in the world, the embodiment of Divine activity, she proceeds from an unknown centre to an indecipherable circumference (grenze) . . . she works to an idea which floats before the mind's eye (vorschwebende). She does nothing on a large scale which she does not repeat on a small. Man represents Nature's first conversation with God. A truly devout mind sees in the Universe nothing but miracles and the very Revelation of God. . . . There is a centrifugal and a centripetal tendency, the strength of the latter is exhibited in the persistence

of residual organs.' Goethe was very conscious of design—'eternal play of the eternal mind'—and he rejected chance.

> So must thou be,
> Thou canst not self escape,
> So erst the Sybils, so the prophets told.
> Nor laws, nor any power can mar the shape impressed,
> That living must itself unfold.

The idea of destiny is the main theme of *The Decline of the West*. When Spengler refers to Goethe's method, he means Goethe's distinction between analysis and intuition. 'Plato, Rembrandt, Goethe, Beethoven, evoke an image contrasted with the critical comprehension of Kant, Descartes, Newton.' Goethe held that the idea could be apprehended in the realm of intuition, but no organism exactly corresponds to the idea; form is mobile; the law which the organism follows is only visible in exceptions; the exception is the norm. The idea is independent of time and space, whereas the phenomena is in them; the simultaneous and the successive are closely connected, but from the standpoint of experience they are always divided—Goethe's poem of the *Web and the Woof*—the idea therefore cannot be 'comprehended' on scientific principles. The artist or the musician can, if he goes deep enough to shed subjective traits, apprehend the idea. In fact it is his duty to do so, not to copy Nature—the marble foot is not required to walk.

Goethe's most notable 'aperçus' followed a new and striking experience. He picked up the sheep's skull on the Lido, in which he observed the intermaxillary bone, or link between the human and the animal, after he had just seen the sea for the first time. He derived the idea that all the organs of a plant are modifications of one fundamental organ from a Treveller's palm which he saw in the Botanical Gardens at Verona just after he had crossed the Alps and was amazed by the wonderful colour of a bank of bignonia.—Tr.

Hugo Willrich to Spengler

Athens, 20.4.36

To the deeply respected trinity in the home of the Muses in Widenmayerstrasse, two old vagabonds send hearty greeting from the city of Pericles in grateful remembrance of happy hours in your home.

Travelling by Trieste, Fiume, Split, Durazzo, Corfu, all of them dying towns, we arrived here where 1½ million people live penned up together, making as much noise as they possibly can. One is grateful to one's creator when one gets out of the buzz up to the citadel, the Lykabettos or the Philoppapos memorial, or on to the hill of Parnes, which gives one the best view over

the plains of Attica. As we had to be in Constantinople for Easter, we left by train on March 7th for Salonika. Daylight lasted until we had passed through the valley of Tempe. Olympus stood out in the sunshine above the mountains with cloud masses above its snow peak. We noticed how few people were to be seen even in the rich plains of Boeotia and Thessaly. Miserable villages cling to the mountain sides. Beneath there is the peace of the grave. In Salonika we experienced a slight earthquake, but apart from that saw nothing of interest, as we had not enough time to visit the old churches. The town as a whole is wretched. We then had a twenty-six hours railway journey through Macedonia, Thrace, and the rest of European Turkey. The journey was interesting to me for historical, and to my friend for geological, reasons. Where the rivers break through the limestone of the mountain chains the scenery is wonderful, the canyon of Nestos is particularly imposing. European Turkey leaves one with an impression of great desolation; in Constantinople also one is never free from the feeling that everything is dedicated to ruin.

Mustapha Kemal is a man who has broken brutally with tradition and does nothing for the maintenance of beautiful antiquities. Grass is sprouting in enchanting little mosques, fine marble buildings are standing empty, are being burnt out or otherwise exposed to ruin. On the Golden Horn, as on the Bosphorus, the one-time glittering palaces are disappearing. From my friend's cousin's house we could see old Galata, Stamboul, the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus, even part of the sea of Marmora. You can imagine the effect of a sunset there. We spent eight days going round industriously, and under the guidance of the lady saw a great deal. Best of all was a journey up the Bosphorus with a landing on the Asiatic side. There the entrance to the Pontus was once protected by a Genoese castle, on the height above, the towers of which still have a stately appearance. Although we only had fifty minutes we, old grenadiers, stormed up in a forced march to get a clear view of the Black Sea and to shout resounding Θάλαττα θάλαττα. The journey back to Athens led us through the Dardanelles: one could only see the site of Aegospotamoi by daylight. At night in the Aegean there was a rough sea; in the

morning I feared that I should have to sacrifice to Poseidon, but it passed off as the sea became calmer when we entered the strait between Euboea and Andros. We saw the temple of Sunium shining in the sun and finally we reached the Piraeus in good order. Yesterday we enjoyed the treasures in the museum, the Bronze Zeus is about the most beautiful statue in the world. . . . Again many thanks and greetings to you all[1] and our dear Albers.

Spengler to Wahrhold Drascher

3.5.36

Many thanks for sending me your book.[2] I have read it in parts for the first time, and should be delighted if it were to penetrate generally to the circles for which it is intended. An obstacle to this will, according to my experience, be its length, as people at the present time are accustomed to read that sort of thing in broschure form. I should have brought out the Russian danger even more strongly, for ultimately it is the area between the Vistula and the Amur in which the history of the next generation will probably be made. . . .

[1] Spengler, his sister and his niece.
[2] *The Predominance of the White Race.*

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